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BEAR REPORT

Walter Payton
Tribute Issue

Vol. 24 No. 25

November 13, 1999

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at ceremony**

**City of big
shoulders slump
after news
of death**

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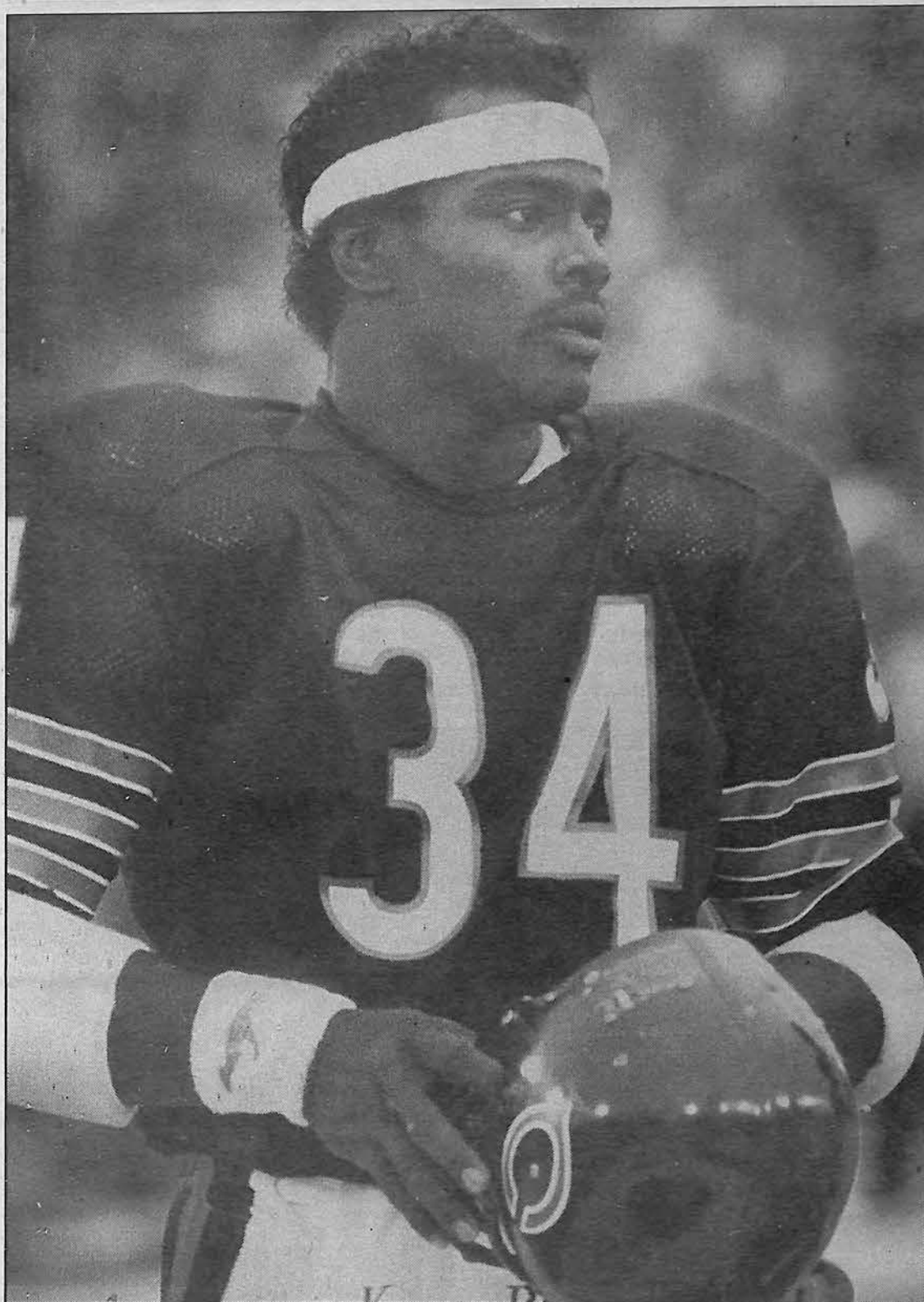
Walter Payton
1954-1999

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REMEMBERING SWEETNESS



Walter Payton 1954-1999

"I think Walter's legacy will be that of a man with a God-given ability that got the most out of it at every possible chance. He did it with pride, he did it with dignity, he did it with respect for the game."

brother Eddie Payton, the golf coach at Jackson State

"Walter was a Chicago icon long before I arrived there. He was a great man off the field, and his on the field accomplishments speak for themselves."

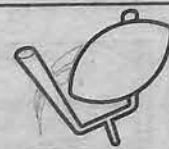
Michael Jordan

"I just happen to love the man, and I love what he stood for. Walter was a great, great representation of how the ball should be moved. He was not worried about running out of bounds. There's nobody who's ever had a bigger heart than Walter."

Jim Brown

"He was a superb athlete but he also was a man of great dignity. He fought the good fight, he kept the faith and he finished the journey. His light went out too quickly. We will never forget the brilliance of his glow."

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson



Extra Points

Sweetness gave all of his fans one wild ride

One of the most "moving" experiences of my youth was a close encounter with Walter Payton. Then a 15-year-old avid Bears fan back in 1981, I accompanied a few friends to the team hotel the night before a home game hoping to rub shoulders with my favorite players.

We slipped into an elevator and were awestruck when the man they called "Sweetness" bounded into the confined area for a trip up to his room. Noticing our eyes were as wide open as James Scott on a good day, he calmly waited until the doors closed before making an impact on our lives.

Without warning, the future Hall of Famer started to playfully hurl his powerful body repeatedly into the walls of the elevator, making the overmatched contraption shake and sway like an amusement park ride. I'm not quite sure how we safely reached the third floor, but when we did he turned and gave us a mischievous ear-to-ear smile.

Feeling connected to the future Hall of Famer because of the thrill ride we shared, one of my friends blurted out an invitation to join us down in the lobby. Payton graciously declined, explaining he had to get his rest because he had to "get up and go to work" the next morning.

The elevator ride probably lasted no more than 90 seconds, but it was more than just a meaningless snippet of time and space. The experience was a perfect example of how Payton lived his life: He created fun out of a completely mundane experience while never losing focus of his primary responsibility.

When Payton died Nov. 1 of bile duct cancer at age 45 after a yearlong battle with liver disease, we lost a true champion who lived every day like it was his last. He was an inspiration to his family, friends, teammates, opponents and fans. And I'm proud to say he was the first and only athlete I ever idolized or considered a hero.

A moment of silence was observed in his memory at all NFL games on Sunday, including the Bears-Packers contest at Lambeau Field. As Bears owners Ed and Virginia McCaskey joined Packers executives Bob Harlan and Ron Wolf on the field, one Packer fan summed it up with a sign that read "You're the only Bear I ever loved."

The Packers also paid tribute to the NFL's all-time leading rusher by flying flags at half-mast and displaying "34" on the play clocks up until the opening kickoff.

While Payton may be the greatest football player of all time, his ability to gain yards and score touchdowns clearly was not his best attribute. His influence off the field was even more significant. When his moment to shine arrived at the culmination of an incomparable career, he chose to share it with his son, Jarrett, who became the first child to officially present a father for induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

While most athletes are remembered for memorable moments on the field, what struck me most in the days following Payton's death was listening on sports radio stations to countless recollections of encounters with him like mine. Callers lined up to share their brushes with a man who was the most approachable and unpretentious megastar perhaps of all time.

Who else could bring the Bears, the city of Chicago and the park district together as he did for the public memorial service? Plus he strengthened the bond between the former Bears he brought together, with the players vowing to try harder to stay in touch. He also provided a history lesson and linked the past to the present for the current players who listened to the tributes at Soldier Field before departing for Green Bay.

I felt the most emotional part of the memorial service was highlights of him on and off the field set to the song, "I Will Always Remember." As images of Payton holding his children as toddlers and running for glory on the field flickered across the screen, the lump in my throat convinced me I was no longer a reporter but again that awestruck kid who will tell his grandchildren about the wild elevator ride I once shared with Sweetness.

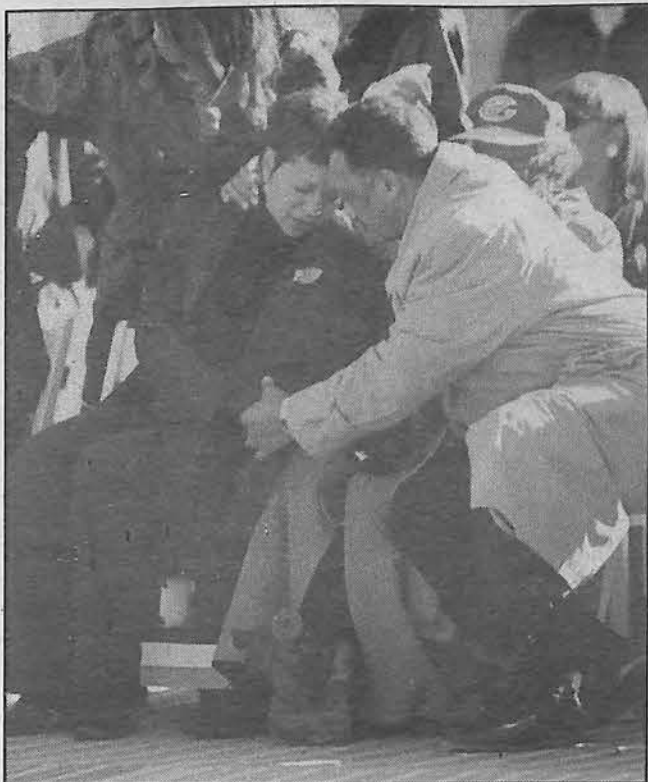


By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Recount Payton memories



DaBearsShrine.com, a network affiliate of Rivals.com, has created an online condolence book for the family of Walter Payton. Fans worldwide can leave a personal message to the Payton family, recounting their favorite personal memories of "Sweetness" by going to PaytonTribute.com or by directly visiting the DaBearShrine.com web site. The family will be presented with a printed version of the book in the future.



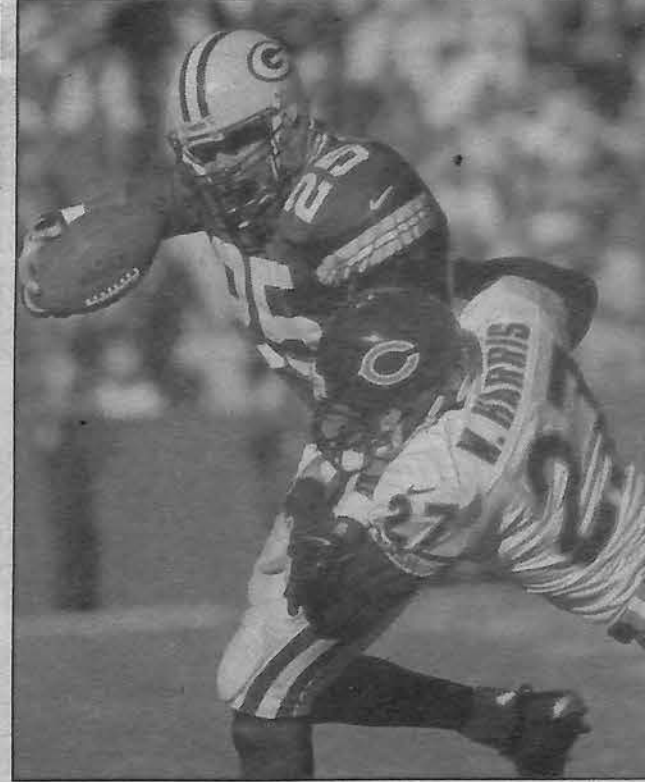
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Rev. Jesse Jackson comforts Connie Payton during a memorial service for her husband last week.



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FOR WALTER: Jim Flanigan idolized Walter Payton growing up and has dedicated the season to him.



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Cover photo by Steve Woltmann

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Photo by Bill Spelman

Bittersweetness

Bears fans paid tribute to the life and legacy of Walter Payton at a memorial service at Soldier Field. Payton died Nov. 1 of bile duct cancer.

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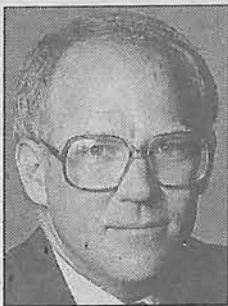
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Payton's grip on Chicago strong as his handshake

Fans reeling from death of superstar who captured soul of city

DON PIERSON



If sports provide metaphors for life, nothing rings truer than football's running back, carrying the ball, struggling to get ahead, needing the help of friends, overcoming obstacles and enemies, striving for goals, getting knocked down, bouncing up again and again until reaching the end zone, triumphant.

Nobody ever ran a football better than Walter Payton, who died of cancer on Nov. 1.

Because he did it for 13 years for the Chicago Bears, Payton's grip on Carl Sandburg's city of big shoulders was as strong as his handshake. His death makes the shoulders slump.

Because his exploits set magnificent athletic standards, his death seems all the more unbelievable. Indestructibly reliable on the field, how could he be so human and vulnerable away from it?

Payton was Chicago's first hero of the superstar era, when the media spotlight first expanded athletic reality into 24-hour fantasy. He followed Ernie Banks and Bobby Hull and Gale Sayers and Dick Butkus and preceded Michael Jordan, who took fantasy to yet another level of imagination.

Payton stayed much closer to earth, by trade and personality. He captured the soul of a city by work habits and results that made steelworkers and hog butchers and ditch-diggers proud.

Teammates remember not only his production, but his practice. No man ever played football harder and no child ever enjoyed it more. Often moody, more often playful, sometimes selfish, more often selfless, Payton never was absent. In 13



When it came to wearing jersey No. 34, no one could compare to Bears superstar Walter Payton, who died Nov. 1 of cancer at the age of 45.

years, he missed only one game and went to his death unhappy about it because he believed his coaches underestimated his determination to ignore a painful ankle. He was only a rookie who would never again allow others to keep him from work.

Relentless in both his running and living style, Payton's premature death shocks yet somehow fits his penchant for doing absolutely everything in a hurry.

His parents in Columbia, Ms., didn't allow him to play football until he reached high school, so he was content to play in the band. But he quickly caught up.

At Jackson State, Payton set collegiate records that no one quite appreciated because of the suspect nature of small-college competition. But when the Bears made him the fourth choice in the first round of the 1975 NFL draft, he had few doubters even though he became a pro at the tender age of 20.

Despite an ordinary rookie season slowed by an elbow injury, Payton quickly established himself as the Bears' primary and often only weapon. His stature as football's all-time leading rusher is enhanced by the memory of defenses stacked to stop him. When he was unable to run around and through tacklers, he jumped over them. In a 7-0 victory over Buffalo in 1979, he launched himself so high over the defensive line for the game's only touchdown that Buffalo defender Fred Smerlas felt like he was trying to swat a fly.

Nicknamed "Sweetness," Payton exuded toughness. No football player ever ran more times for more yards for more years. In the tradition of George Halas and Bronko Nagurski and Bulldog Turner and Bill George and Mike Ditka and Dick Butkus and Mike Singletary, there was nothing sweet or pretty about the way Payton played. If no running back ever absorbed more hits, none ever delivered more blows with forearms the envy of

Popeye.

"I love the contact," he said.

Likewise, he connected with fans by rarely sounding cocky. He measured his words and rarely sought the cameras, although he certainly didn't mind the attention.

Neither sullen like Jim Brown nor glib like O.J. Simpson—the great running backs whose records Payton broke—Payton let his performance speak for itself, yet privately expressed anger recently that ESPN ranked San Francisco receiver Jerry Rice ahead of him on the list of the century's top athletes. Payton's constant game of cat-and-mouse with reporters amused him but remained consistent with his constant motion on and off the field.

Never a breakaway runner with classic sprinter's speed, Payton nevertheless was so fast off the mark that he believed he burned energy the way a dragster burns off fuel. So his most memorable runs are short, attacking bursts the way a jackhammer approaches cement, inexorable and indefatigable.

He drove cars the same way, as fast as he could, faster than his passengers would dare. He became a race driver, but tried to drive even fast cars too fast. As a businessman, he bounced from project to project, always attracted to the action. As a family man, he had great pride in a son and daughter and enjoyed pointing out his son was bigger and his daughter might be faster than their dad.

The enduring image even as he struggled against a fatal disease is of Walter Payton reaching out, sometimes when the referee wasn't looking, usually after the whistle had blown, from underneath the pile, his hand emerging with the ball, stretching for that last extra yard.

Don Pierson covers the Bears and the NFL for the Chicago Tribune.



Payton's Place

Memorable quotes from Walter:

"Once my career's over, whatever happens, it's God's will. I have no control over it. As far as anyone coming along and breaking that record, I have no quarrels about it. Just as long as it's my son."

On setting the NFL's all-time rushing record

"I don't perceive myself as being better than anyone. I shovel my driveway. I go to the grocery store. I pump my own gas. Some athletes don't do that."

In a 1993 interview

"I'm not a role model. I'm just Walter Payton. If kids see some good in me they can utilize and emulate and make their lives better, so well and so good. But they have to realize I'm human just like anybody else."

On his impact

"I just wanted to have a great deal of fun and provide a decent living for my family. That was it. Those were my major goals. Anything else that came along was extra."

On his expectations upon entering the league

"Hell, yeah, I'm scared. Wouldn't you be scared?"

After revealing Feb. 2 that he was suffering from a rare liver disease

"It's just like football. You never know when or what your last play is going to be. You just play it and play it because you love it. Same way with life. You live life because you love it."

Three days after announcing he was suffering from PSC

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■ *The same body that enabled Walter Payton to become an indestructible force in football was ravaged with a disease that cost him his life at age 45*



"He was the best football player I've ever seen, and probably one of the best people I've ever met."

Mike Ditka

Bears legend dies

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

When "The NFL Today" once set the music and lyrics of the song "Nobody Does It Better" to highlights of the incomparable Walter Payton, it was as powerful as one of his patented stiff-arms. That's because "Sweetness" was simultaneously as fluid as a saxophone riff and as relentless as a drum solo.

He was never the biggest or fastest running back in the league, but his sheer will to achieve could move mountains, not to mention overmatched linebackers. He came, he saw, he high-stepped. His quickness and elusiveness were legendary, but he seemed to take the most pride in running over and through defenders.

The NFL's all-time leading rusher initiated many of the violent collisions, dishing out punishment most running backs only absorb. Then he sprang to his feet and helped befuddled opponents off the ground with a playful pat on the behind. He fought for every extra yard and never ran out of bounds. He was respected by fans, teammates and opponents alike. He was simply the heart and soul of the Chicago Bears both on and off the field.

Yet while Payton's incredible drive helped him hurdle every obstacle on the football field, he was unable to win the battle for his life. It's a cruel irony that the same indestructible body that enabled him to miss only one game in 13 NFL seasons was ravaged with a fatal disease.

Walter Payton died at noon on Monday, Nov. 1 at his South Barrington home of bile duct cancer, a condition associated with primary sclerosing cholangitis, a rare liver disease he had suffered from since last fall. He was 45. An intensely private person who didn't want sympathy, Payton kept the seriousness of his condition a secret until the very end.

"The Bears and the city of Chicago and fans everywhere have lost a great friend and hero," said Bears president Ted Phillips. "He's the model of the perfect athlete. He's the complete package. He was much more than a football player, he was a special human being."

Stung by whispers and innuendo concerning his dramatic weight loss, Payton revealed Feb. 2 that he had PSC and needed a liver transplant to survive. But the cancer, which was reportedly discovered in May, precluded that option.

"A known complication of this liver disease is this type of cancer," said Dr. Greg Gores, a liver specialist at the Mayo Clinic. "Unfortunately, Walter's malignancy was very advanced and progressed extremely rapidly."

Payton spent his final hours surrounded



Walter Payton
1954-1999

by family and close friends including ex-teammates Matt Suhey and Mike Singletary.

"I think outside of anything else I've seen—the greatest run, the greatest moves—what I experienced this weekend was by far the best of Walter Payton that I had seen," Singletary said at a Halas Hall press conference hours after Payton's death.

"When I left him (Monday morning), I remember going home and telling my wife that there was a peace that surpassed all understanding when I looked at him. There was a peace there I had definitely not seen all year."

A clear sign Payton was gravely ill occurred less than a week before his death when his son, Jarrett, was summoned home from the University of Miami where he is a freshman running back.

Jarrett, who served as his father's official presenter at Hall of Fame ceremonies in 1993, helped say goodbye by reading a written statement during the Monday evening press conference at Halas Hall.

"The last 12 months have been extremely tough on me and my family," said the 18-year-old. "We learned a lot about love and life. Our greatest thanks goes out to the people of Chicago. You adopted my dad and made him yours. He loved you all."

Indeed he did, but the feeling was mutual. One of the most beloved figures in Chicago history, Payton joined the Bears as the fourth overall pick in the 1975 draft.

He arrived on a team that boasted a history of outstanding running backs such as Bronko Nagurski, Red Grange and Gale Sayers. But Payton emerged as the greatest of all time.

He broke Jim Brown's career rushing record in 1984 and remains the NFL's all-time leader 15 years later with 16,726 yards. He holds seven other league records including most yards in a game (275) and most 100-yard efforts (77). He owns 28 Bears team marks, won a Super Bowl, was voted to nine Pro Bowls and is generally considered the best all-around player in NFL history.

"He was the best football player I've ever seen, and probably one of the best people I've ever met," said Mike Ditka, who coached Payton from 1982-87.

"Here's a guy who had the most heart I've ever seen in a football player," said former teammate Jim McMahon. "He wanted to do whatever it would take for the team to win. He was the greatest, and he didn't act like it."

"There were few guys who could gear up every play of every game of every season for 13 years," said former Denver Broncos linebacker Tom Jackson. "When you're playing against a guy like that, that's what you learn to respect. It's easy to be average all the time. But for a guy to be great all the time, then you've got something special."

The Hall of Fame running back was born Walter Jerry Payton on July 25, 1954 in Columbia, Miss., the youngest of three children of Alyne, a dietitian, and Peter, a factory worker.

He graduated from Jackson State University with a B.A. in special education at age 20. Bill Tobin scouted Payton during a college career in which he led

Division II in scoring with 464 points, the most in NCAA history.

"I don't even consider him a rare breed," Tobin once said. "I just consider him a total, special, special individual. He's a complete phenomenon, in my opinion, and he's the best player I've ever, ever seen or hope to ever see."

Off the field, Payton's generosity and charisma fueled his status as a genuine hero. After retiring from football he coached high school basketball, read to children in a literacy program, and anonymously donated thousands of dollars to charity.

"Walter was Chicago icon long before I arrived there," said Bulls legend Michael Jordan. "He was a great man off the field, and his on the field accomplishments speak for themselves."

Payton was always peeved about the one game he missed. He insists he could have played but was kept out of the contest by Bears coach Jack Pardee.

"I didn't miss a game, and I hate it when people say that," Payton once said. "That was a coach's decision. I could have played."

Ultimately, Payton was even prouder of his durability than his productivity.

"I never skipped a down. I never took a rest," Payton said once when asked what his legacy should be. "I never missed a game. I came to play and that's what's important to me."

"All the glory, all the yards and all the touchdowns don't mean a thing. I came to play on every down and I never took a rest. That's how I want to be remembered."

Payton is survived by his wife, Connie, and their children, Jarrett and Brittney.



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Devastating discovery

Cancer diagnosis precluded possibility of transplant

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

When Walter Payton announced he was suffering from a rare liver disease at a Feb. 2 news conference, medical experts expressed guarded optimism and hope for a full recovery.

"The chances of him getting a new liver are very good," Dr. Joseph Lagattuta, a liver specialist at Elmhurst Hospital, said at the time. "We're optimistic he'll return to a normal, active life. We're at a point now where people who had transplants as children are having babies themselves."

Payton's positive prognosis changed dramatically when he visited the Mayo Clinic in May. According to this week's *Sports Illustrated*, the Bears legend traveled to the Rochester, Minn., facility to undergo a physical because he was nearing the point where he'd be eligible for a liver transplant. But an exam revealed a malignant tumor in Payton's bile ducts, which precluded his receiving a transplant.

Bile duct cancer is a common compli-

cation of primary sclerosing cholangitis, the rare liver disease he was suffering from.

The news that a life-saving transplant was no longer an option devastated Payton, who nevertheless retained a positive attitude until his death on Nov. 1.

"He thought he was going home with a beeper to wait for the call and for a new liver," Ginny Quirk, Payton's long-time business manager, said in the SI story. "Instead, he got the news that he had cancer. It devastated him. But he wanted to keep the fact that he had cancer quiet. He didn't want people to feel sorry for him."

After the cancer was discovered, Payton was enrolled in a unique treatment protocol developed by the Mayo Clinic. He received chemotherapy and radiation treatment, but the cancer still spread outside his liver.

"If the disease spreads outside the liver, simply removing the liver does not remove the disease, so the disease comes back with a vengeance," said Dr. Greg Gores, a liver specialist at the Mayo Clinic.

Payton was placed on the national liver

transplant list but was never considered a transplant candidate because of the cancer. Undergoing a transplant in his condition could have hastened his decline. The anti-rejection drugs used for such procedures suppress the immune system, which makes it more difficult to fight off cancer.

"It's like adding gasoline to a fire," said Dr. John Brems, a liver transplant specialist at Loyola University Medical Center.

When Payton first announced he was suffering from PSC, his prognosis was positive because of the success rate of liver transplant patients. At the time, the Mayo Clinic stated the one-year survival rate for its liver transplant patients was 88.7 percent, and the five-year survival rate was 80 percent.

PSC is a progressive disease that leads to liver failure and affects only three in 100,000 people. It causes a narrowing of the bile ducts inside and outside the liver. As the inflammation spreads, the bile ducts are destroyed and scar tissue forms.

The cause of PSC is not known, but is not related to alcohol consumption, viral hepatitis, immune deficiency disease or steroid use.

Former Bears offered their support until friend's death

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

The man who often carried the Bears on his shoulders wasn't alone in the final hours and days before his death.

Supportive former teammates spent time laughing, crying and praying at Walter Payton's bedside as he waged an unsuccessful battle against bile duct cancer. The NFL's all-time leading rusher died Nov. 1 at his home in South Barrington.

Mike Singletary was among those who visited Payton in the final hours of his life.

"It's been a difficult year, a difficult time for Walter and his family," Singletary said. "But he was lying there and there was no tense look in his face, just peace. Somewhere in the midst of all of it, he found Jesus Christ. Because of that, I don't have to stand here and cry."

The most supportive of all ex-teammates was former Bears fullback Matt Suhey, who visited Payton practically every day and often took him out of the house.

"Matt Suhey was so gracious, going by and cheering him up, picking him up," Singletary said. "I was just amazed by that. Matt wouldn't let him stay home."

Other former teammates that visited Payton in recent weeks included Dave Duerson, Dennis McKinnon and Les Frazier, a defensive assistant with the Philadelphia Eagles who went to Payton's house when the Eagles were in town to play the Bears last month.

"It was very obvious he was tired, so



Roland Harper and Walter Payton were two fresh-faced rookies in this 1975 photo. Some of Payton's teammates spent the final days of his life with him.

Les and I carried on the conversation a while," Singletary said.

When Frazier and Singletary visited, Payton was most interested in discussing his son, Jarrett, an 18-year-old freshman running back at the University of Miami. Following his father's death, Jarrett thanked the ex-Bears for their support.

"Thanks to the Bears teammates that called and came by so regularly to boost his spirits," Jarrett said at a news conference hours after his father's death. "They say it is tough to understand the family relationship that exists between teammates. I understand that today more than ever."

During the summer, about 30 former Bears players and coaches joined Payton in a private room at a local restaurant. By then, Payton knew he had cancer and was no longer a candidate to receive a life-saving liver transplant.

"Walter was in the middle of the group and we were all laughing about the old

times," Singletary said. "Pretty soon we realized the guy cracking all the jokes was the guy we were supposed to be there for."

That Payton would succumb to a physical ailment like cancer was a fate those close to him had difficulty comprehending. The Hall of Fame running back was known for his devotion to a rigorous conditioning regime that included training on a suburban Arlington Heights hill that has since been converted into a golf course. Payton missed one game in 13 NFL seasons, and always insisted a coach's decision is what kept him from a perfect durability record.

"You talk about a guy who was invincible," said former Bears coach Mike Ditka. "That's why he got the rushing record. He was so durable. He was there every week."

"This is hard to believe and it hurts. It had to be humiliating for him, from being the person he was to dealing with his health like he did."

"Walter was always willing to sacrifice on the field for the sake of the team. Ten guys would pile on top of him and he would be the first guy to get up."

Emery Moorehead

"The most incredible thing I ever saw was the time he threw me a 50-yard touchdown pass. He was going down and had to whip the ball that far sidearm."

Brian Baschnagel

"I had the greatest job in the world. For six years I got to hand the ball to Walter Payton. Every Sunday I walked onto the field of the NFL with the greatest running back of all time."

Jim McMahon

"I will always remember his smile. He loved to laugh, he loved to have fun, and you couldn't believe a guy that was as great as he was would have that much humor, and wouldn't take himself so seriously."

Mike Singletary

"He meant so much to the city of Chicago. 'Sweetness' -- there may not have been a better nickname for a player."

Jim Harbaugh

"I don't remember Walter Payton winning a championship. I remember Walter Payton being the backbone of those Bears teams when they struggled."

"His never ending spirit to fight for every yard, fight for every inch. Whenever he got his hands on the football, it almost became surreal. You were watching something very magical, something special."

Joe Theismann

"God must have taken a chisel and said, 'I'm going to make me a halfback.'"

Fred O'Connor, Payton's first position coach with the Bears

Ditka mourns former runner

Somber coach recalls greatness

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Suddenly losing to a winless expansion team on a Hail Mary pass on the final play of the game didn't seem so important.

One day after absorbing his sixth straight loss as head coach of the New Orleans Saints, Mike Ditka learned that former star player Walter Payton had died of bile duct cancer at his home in suburban Chicago.

"It's really sad to me," said Ditka, who coached Payton from 1982-87. "But the first thought I had of him was not of sadness. It was of all the great things he meant to the city of Chicago and the Bears and the fans. To watch him play was pretty special."

Like most of us, Ditka was shocked to discover that Payton had suffered from cancer that precluded him from receiving a life-saving liver transplant.

"I really think that Walter for the longest time felt it was just a matter of getting a liver transplant and being Walter again," Ditka said. "I really think he believed that, and I think a lot of people believed that including me. It was just a matter of when he gets the liver it's going to be Walter all over again, the same old guy."

Other former Bears coaches were just

as saddened as Ditka. Johnny Roland, Chicago's running backs coach during Payton's best years, shared his sorrow with former Bears linebackers coach Dave McGinnis in Arizona where the two are Cardinals assistants.

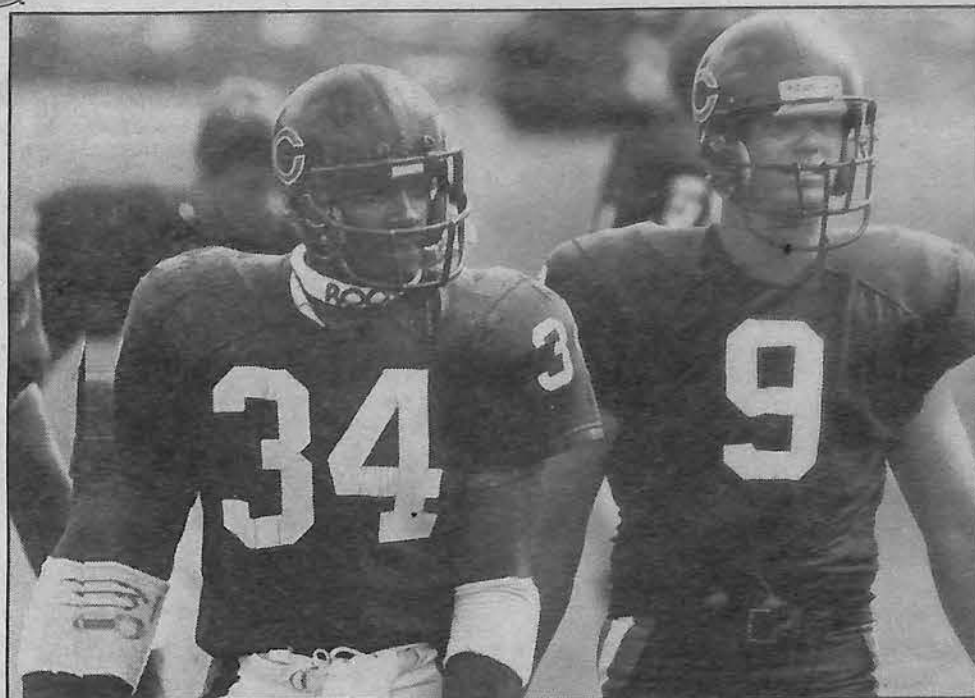
"We sat and we looked at each other and we both cried," McGinnis said. "It's hard to imagine that he's gone."

Payton, who long was the Bears' only offensive weapon, finally played for a championship team in 1985. He rushed for 1,551 yards and nine touchdowns as the Bears went 15-1 in the regular season before sailing through the playoffs.

"I think he was the one guy that really worked hard at pulling that team together in the '80s when it could have come apart," Ditka said. "We were kind of a faction of offense and defense and he really worked hard at pulling it together and got each side to respect each other. We finally became a football team instead of an offense and a defense."

Ditka, who led the Bears to a 46-10 win over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XX, has repeatedly said that Payton is the best player he has ever seen.

"I mean no disrespect to any player because there's been a lot of great players," Ditka said. "I'll just say he's the best I ever saw, and I believe the best there ever was."



Hall of Fame running back Walter Payton and quarterback Jim McMahon combined to give the Bears a potent offensive attack during the mid-1980s.

It's hard to argue considering Payton set the league's career rushing record, averaged 31.7 yards returning kickoffs and even threw eight touchdown passes out of 11 career completions. Plus, "Sweetness" may have been the finest blocker at his position of all time.

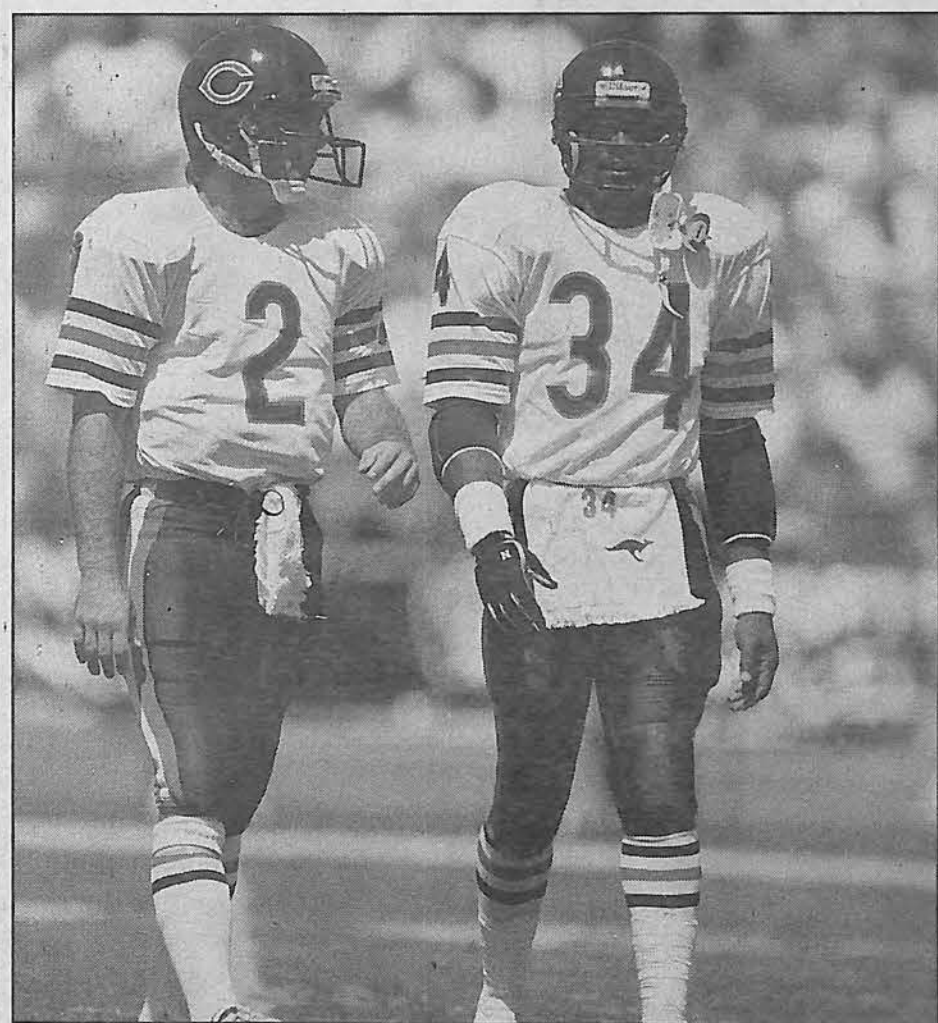
"I looked at Walter differently," Ditka said. "I got as much pleasure watching him block somebody as watching him run for a touchdown, or watching him catch a pass or throw a pass or kick the ball. He could do it all. In practice he did it as well as most people. He was just a talented guy."

"He was also the hardest working guy

we had. He was the first guy there and the last guy to leave. He came to camp in the best shape of anybody that I've ever seen and he did it all on his own."

Ditka wasn't planning on letting his work responsibilities interfere with attending memorial services for his former star.

"As you get older," Ditka said, "I'm finding some things I felt important are less important and how valued are the friendships that we've had and the friendships and the people whose lives have touched ours like Walter. You take for granted that he's going to be here for a long, long time and he's not!"



"During the playoffs, he'd pull my socks down in the huddle. When I was in Chicago, it was kind of a hostile atmosphere and Walter was one of my closest friends on the team. It was a privilege to play with him."

Doug Flutie

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**SPORTS
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By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Before the glory years of the mid-'80s, the incomparable Walter Payton was the only reason thousands of Chicago Bears fans spent autumn afternoons at Soldier Field.

History repeated itself on Saturday, Nov. 6 at the venerable stadium on Chicago's lakefront. Only this time, the No. 34 jerseys sprinkled throughout the crowd cloaked heavy hearts and were spotted with tears of sorrow.

In an unprecedented display of love and devotion, about 20,000 fans paid tribute to the life and legacy of the Hall of Fame running back who died Nov. 1 of bile duct cancer at age 45.

In attendance at the emotional 90-minute memorial service were Payton's family, 30 former Bears—many of whom were his teammates on the 1985 Super Bowl championship team—and every member of the current team and coaching staff. Also present were Bears owners Ed and Virginia McCaskey and dignitaries such as Rev. Jesse Jackson and NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue.

Flags bearing Payton's famous uniform number flew at half-staff, the 30-yard line was repainted as the "34," and a temporary Jumbotron scoreboard suspended by a crane beyond the north end zone showed highlights of his life set to music. The Sweet Holy Spirit Full Gospel Choir also provided inspirational musical interludes. The program was emceed by former teammates and local sportscasters Mike Adamle and Dan Jiggetts along with sportscaster Tim Weigel.

One of the most beloved athletes of all time, Payton broke Jim Brown's career rushing record in 1984 and still holds the mark 15 years later with 16,726 yards. But the man they called "Sweetness" was even more admired as a human being.

Listening to the recollections of those who knew him best and loved him most created a somber yet celebratory mood at the memorial service.

"I never met him, but I felt like he was a good friend," said fan Bill Mercer, 31,

Fans say bye to Sweetness

clad in a Payton jersey and sitting in the first row at midfield. "What he did off the field speaks volumes. That's even better than what he did on the field. I grew up with him. He reminds me of being a kid, and I just had to be here."

Sanford McMullen, 41, was capturing the ceremony on videotape while holding his two-year-old son, Alexander.

"He was a great person outside of being a great athlete," McMullen said. "The things that he did in his private life, people are starting to recognize that. It just magnifies what he was on the field, and that's why I wanted my son to be here to see it."

"He meant a great deal to me as a person and as an athlete and as a role model because he was a role model. He accepted it. You never saw Walter with an entourage, you never heard about Walter getting into any problems. I wanted to come here and pay my respects and bring my son."

Signs scattered throughout the crowd included messages such as "Thank you for the memories," "We'll miss you Walter," and "Like is a little less sweet."

"Everybody ran around the front yard and yelled out Walter's name, and you jumped over your friend onto the couch head first," said fan Dave Schwieder, 32. "Everything Walter did, you wanted to do."

"It wasn't convenient to get down here, I just felt I had to do it. I loved the man."

It was fitting the tribute was held at Soldier Field, a place where Payton delighted Bears fans from 1975-87.

"I've got a little girl who's four years old," said former teammate Dan Hampton, his voice cracking. "Ten years from now when she asks me about the Chicago Bears, I'll tell her about a championship and I'll tell her about great teams, and great teammates and great coaches, and

Participants in the memorial service each left a single rose in front of a poster of Walter Payton.

how great it was to be a part of it. But the first thing I'll tell her about is Walter Payton."

Before the service officially started, fans were treated to a montage of video highlights. One NFL Films clip described him as "a back with the toughness of a Tonka toy and the quickness of a cat."

"He was a warrior, a neighbor and a friend," Tagliabue told the crowd. "On this Soldier Field and between these goal posts and on dozens more, he was, as Mike Ditka said, a football warrior and a gladiator. He never gave up. He was seemingly indestructible, and in the eyes of many, he was the greatest football player of all time."

The memorial service opened with the introduction of the former Bears. Then the appearance of the current team elicited chants of "Beat the Pack, Beat the Pack." The '99 Bears later left the ceremony early to travel to Green Bay for a game the following day against the rival Packers.

Several Bears have dedicated the rest of the season to Payton's memory.

"Speaking for the players in our locker room," defensive tackle Jim Flanigan told the crowd, "we will do our best to uphold Walter's legacy and to honor his memory in our fight, our pride and our intensity."

"For the rest of this season, I'll play for Walter and his family and his ex-teammates," added tackle James "Big Cat" Williams. "I'll keep them all in my heart and in my head."

Fans shed tears but also shared in the laughter at the recollections of Payton's legendary pranks. He routinely set off cherry bombs in team dormitories during training camp and pulled other practical jokes to keep his teammates loose. Safety Dave Duerson remembered trying to enjoy his first practice with the NFC Pro Bowl squad in Hawaii a few days after the Bears won the Super Bowl.

"I was prancing over to the practice field, so proud to be with all these great

Mike Singletary reflects on the memory of his friend (left) and Connie Payton addresses the crowd while flanked by children Brittney and Jarrett.



legends on a wonderful warm afternoon in sunny Hawaii," Duerson remembered. "After about three minutes it started getting awfully warm. Walter had put some unscented liquid heat in my jock. It was a very hot afternoon in warm, sunny Hawaii."

Even, in death, Payton continued to help the less fortunate. In lieu of flowers or donations, his family asked fans to bring unwrapped toys to the event to assist the Walter Payton Foundation's "Wishes to Santa Program."

In addition, volunteers from the Illinois Secretary of State's office passed out organ donor cards to fans entering the stadium. Duerson displayed his signed organ donor card and encouraged others to join him.

"You too can make a difference," he said. "You talk about a celebration of life, you have an opportunity to give the gift of life."

The service concluded with words from Payton's son, Jarrett, his wife, Connie, and his brother, Eddie. Also in attendance were Payton's daughter, Brittney, his mother, Alyne, and his sister, Pam. His father, Peter, died in 1978.

A final musical tribute left few dry eyes. Set to the Sarah McLachlan song, "I Will Remember You," it featured Payton holding both of his children when they were toddlers, running the famous hill he conditioned on and throwing out the first ball at a Cubs game.

Though his family wept at the conclusion of the ceremony, the tremendous composure they displayed throughout the year-long ordeal is proof Payton's legacy will live on long after his football records are shattered.



All photos on this page by Bill Spelman

"I think things happen because they're supposed to happen. Walter was supposed to be a Chicago Bear, and he was, and he was the greatest one of all."

Mike Ditka

"I played against Jim Brown and Gale Sayers, and Walter did everything they could do, but he did it for a longer time. He was the greatest running back of all time."

Jack Pardee

"To give you an idea of what the rest of the league thinks about Payton, in our film sessions, our defense actually applauded when they saw Payton make some of his runs."

Bud Grant

"His work ethic was as good as anyone who ever played. Walter's work speaks for itself. Words are not necessary."

Jim Brown

"The greatest running back of all time was Walter Payton because he did it all. He ran and he blocked and he caught. He was a football player and he had fun doing it. He was so special to this game. I think in all my years of broadcasting, Walter Payton was my favorite player."

John Madden

"He broke all the rules -- that you've got to be big and powerful to be a power running back. He left as strong on his last run as he did when he first came into the league."

Leroy Hoard

"We all remember him for the things he did on the field, but those who knew him knew of all the other things he did off the field. He did it without publicity, even for people that he really didn't know that well. He was kind of shy until he got to know you. And then you had a friend for life."

Ronnie Bull



Photo by Steve Woltmann

Hall of Fame runner Walter Payton, here talking to return man Johnny Bailey in the early '90s, was a fixture on the Bears sideline following his retirement.

Bears praise a fallen hero

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Jim Flanigan grew up in Green Bay as an avid Packers fan. His father even played in Titledown under legendary coach Vince Lombardi.

But Flanigan still had a poster of Bears Hall of Famer Walter Payton tacked to his bedroom wall.

"Even in the middle of Packer country, everybody was aware of what a great player he was and what an effect he had on people across the country and around the world," Flanigan said.

Several current Bears idolized Payton while growing up. Those who weren't familiar with what "Sweetness" meant to the team and the city should have some idea now. In the days following his death, Chicago radio and TV stations devoted the majority of their programming to Payton tributes and highlights, celebrating the life of perhaps the most beloved athlete in city history.

"It gave this young team an opportunity to connect with maybe the greatest Bears football player that ever lived," said head coach Dick Jauron. "They learned a good deal about him over the course of the last couple of days—what he represented to this organization, and how he represented the city, the fans, the league and the game of football itself."

Bears team president reiterated the message in addressing the team two days after Payton passed away.

"I just wanted them to understand from the club's perspective what an inspirational man and what a giant Walter Payton was," Phillips said. "Some of our young players grew up idolizing Walter. Some grew up just knowing who he was and didn't have a full grasp of what he meant to this organization, this city and the NFL."

Payton's memory will serve as inspiration to members of the current team.

"When I think about him and what he meant to the Chicago Bears as a person

and as a player, I want to play that much better for Walter and the memory of Walter," said guard Todd Perry. "I hate to think of the way we played (in a 48-22 loss at Washington) possibly being the last game he ever saw."

"I'd much rather go out there and lay it on the line in Walter's memory and I'm sure he's going to be in all the guys' thoughts."

"He's an inspiration to everybody in this locker room," Flanigan said. "Everybody knows the legacy that he's left and the effect that he's had on the game. Anybody who has loved sport or loved football has loved Walter Payton."

In retirement, Payton was no stranger to the Bears sideline, where he offered encouragement and kept things loose with his sense of humor.

"Everyone talks about him being so lighthearted and he really was," said tight end Ryan Wetnight. "He was one of those guys you meet for the first time and he'd act as if he had known you your whole life."

"He epitomizes what the Chicago Bears are all about. When people talk about toughness, attitude and heart, that's Walter Payton. Just watching him on the sidelines was inspiring."

The Bears will wear a patch in Payton's memory on the upper left portion of their jerseys for the rest of the season. It will consist of a navy blue football with an orange number 34 inside it.

Payton's passing even pained players who had never met him.

"It's a shame ... I never got to meet him," said rookie quarterback Cade McNown. "Everybody says wonderful things about him. Everything I've seen on him ... I really felt touched watching it."

"The way he approached the game is the way I try to approach the game—just all-out effort on every play. I'm happy that we're going to be wearing patches throughout the year that are dedicated to his memory. He's as much, if not more, of the Bears' lore than anybody in history."

"Walter Payton faced his illness with the same grit and determination that he showed every week on the football field. The people of Chicago -- and all Americans who love the game of football -- will miss him profoundly."

President Bill Clinton

"He just had a wonderful zest for life, and that's something that's unusual in people of his stature. Most people of his stature who have achieved what he achieved in life really don't want to be bothered with the general public. He was the exact opposite, and from the common guy on the street to heads of state to kings and queens, Walter was just that, Walter Payton."

Dan Jiggett

"He's not only the greatest running back who ever played, he's the greatest football player that ever played. He could do it all. He was a complete player and he was a pleasure to play with."

Jim Covert

"I don't think anybody had the same burning desire. He was a great competitor. He had the desire to do well, whether it was blocking, receiving or running. His ability to play under any conditions was the most remarkable thing about him."

Matt Suhey

"Everybody knows the legacy that he's left and the effect that he's had on the game. Anybody who has loved sports or loved football has loved Walter Payton."

Jim Flanigan

"I do remember the stiff-arm, and it was brutal. He was so strong everywhere: lower body, upper body, arms, hands. And when he put that straight arm on your mask, there was no way you could get a hold of him. Generally he'd bend you over backwards and you'd be on the ground and he had such great balance, he'd still be running."

Dick Jauron

Son shows composure

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Watching son Jarrett play football for St. Viator High School in suburban Chicago, Walter Payton had a gleam in his eye that only a proud parent could understand.

The Bears legend would have been brimming with the same type of pride had he been able to witness Jarrett's performance at Halas Hall on the evening of Nov. 1.

Hours after his father died of bile duct cancer, the 18-year-old college freshman stepped in front of a large contingent of media and read a statement from the family. He thanked all those who provided love, support and prayers during his father's illness.

Jarrett's composure was remarkable considering the close bond between father and son. That relationship was initially on public display when Jarrett became the first child to serve as a presenter at the Hall of Fame in 1993.

An even more telling sign of their

affection for one another came on Feb. 2 when Payton held a news conference to disclose that he was suffering from a rare liver disease. When asked to deliver a message to his fans, Walter's voice cracked and he stopped in mid-sentence.

It was then that Jarrett comforted him, wrapping his left arm around his dad's shoulder and pulling him into a bear hug.

Now that Jarrett and his 14-year-old sister Brittney must cope with losing their father, they will certainly draw from some of the lessons taught by their dad. Despite affluence from his success as a pro football player, Walter only gave his children enough spending money so that they would appreciate the value of a dollar.

Jarrett received a new BMW for his high school graduation, but Walter reportedly wouldn't let him take it with him to the University of Miami.

"Can you imagine, a brand new BMW, and it's sitting in the Payton's family garage," Kevin Kelly, Walter's close friend and Jarrett's high school football coach, told the *Chicago Tribune*. "Jarrett was telling me how he had to walk to class

in the rain one morning. He was mad that his dad wouldn't let him drive that car at Miami. That's Walter for you. He never wanted life to come too easy for Jarrett."

Jarrett avoided the inevitable athletic comparisons between himself and his dad by playing soccer his first two years of high school. And even when he switched to football as a junior, he played quarterback, not running back.

"When Jarrett was growing up, I'd hoped he would be a basketball player," Payton once said. "I love basketball more than football. Jarrett was having so much fun playing soccer that I encouraged him to continue. The decision to play football is something he is doing all on his own."

At Miami, Jarrett is now playing the same position that made his father famous.

Of course, that creates the staggering possibility that a Payton could once again play running back for the Chicago Bears.

If that ever happens, it's comforting to believe that Walter will be looking down from above with that same gleam in his eye.

Statement by Dr. Greg Gores, a liver specialist at the Mayo Clinic:

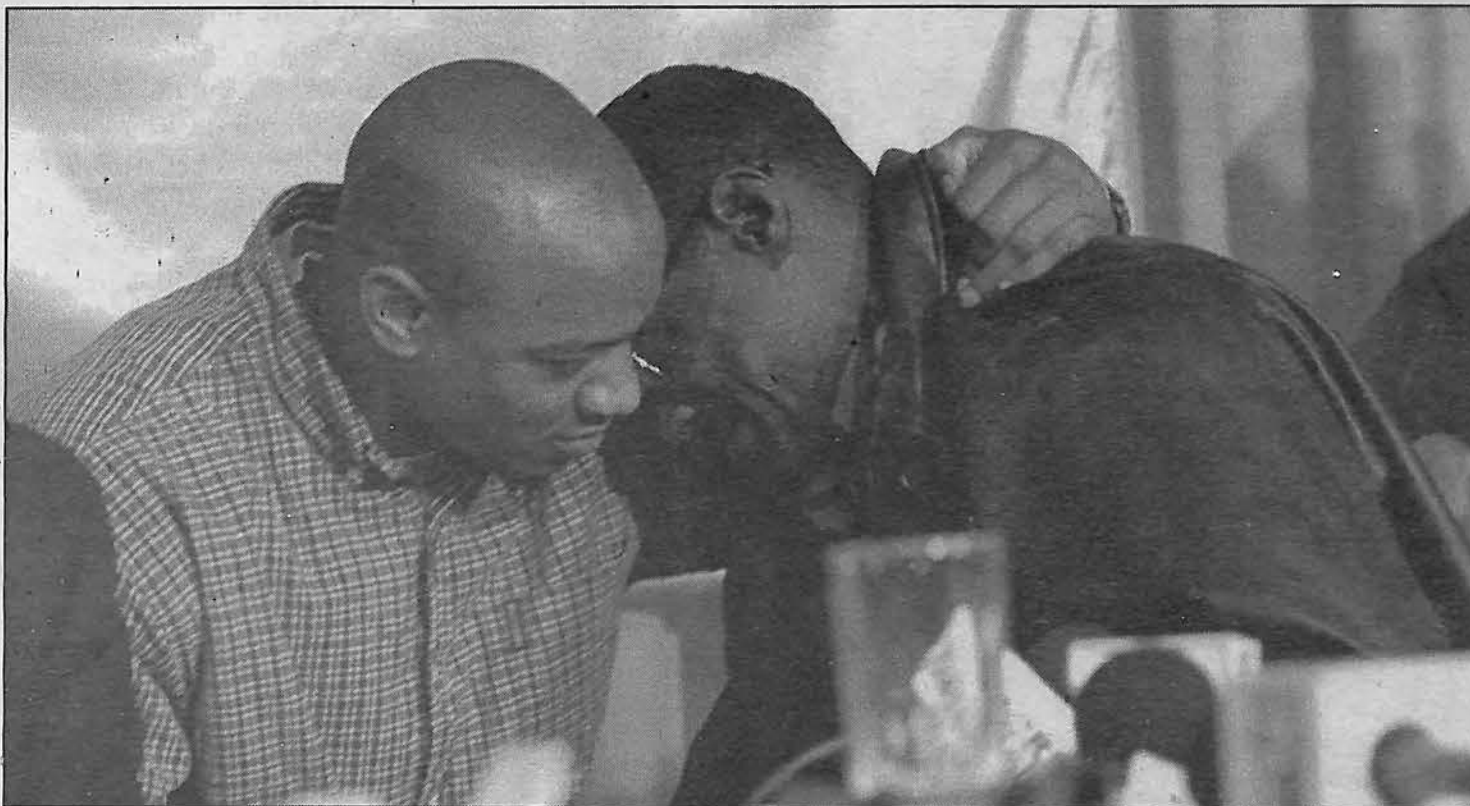
"During the course of Walter Payton's care for primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC) at Mayo Clinic, it was discovered that he had a malignancy of the bile duct.

"Walter was then enrolled in a unique treatment protocol that has been found to be effective in Mayo Clinic liver cancer patients with no other treatment options and whose bile duct malignancy cannot be removed surgically.

"Unfortunately, Walter's malignancy was very advanced and progressed rapidly. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy were given as part of the treatment protocol, but because of the aggressive nature of his cancer, Walter's malignancy spread outside the liver. As a result, his malignancy progressed to a stage where liver transplant was no longer an option.

"Walter was offered a variety of additional treatment options for his disease when it became apparent that liver transplant was no longer an option. Like all patients, he made an informed decision regarding additional therapy. As in all cases, his care was administered in accordance with his wishes and those of his family.

"We extend our sympathy to his family and friends during this time of loss."



Bears legend Walter Payton leaned on son Jarrett for emotional support after breaking down in tears at a Feb. 2 press conference during which he revealed he was suffering from a life-threatening liver disease.

Payton considered like one of family by Bears owners

As the only member of the Bears Board of Directors who doesn't own a portion of the team, Walter Payton once joked he was the "black sheep" of the McCaskey family.

In truth, the reason "Sweetness" was put in that position in the first place was the McCaskey family's unwavering love for the legendary running back.

Virginia McCaskey, the daughter of Bears founder George Halas, addressed the media Nov. 1 at Halas Hall just hours after Payton had died of bile duct cancer.

"After Brian Piccolo died, my husband, Ed, and I promised ourselves that we wouldn't be so personally involved with any of the players," said Mrs. McCaskey, her voice cracking before she took a deep breath to compose herself. "And we were

able to follow that resolve until Walter Payton came into our lives. And you all know what a difference he's made for all of us, for the Chicago Bears, for the National Football League."

In 13 seasons with the Bears, Payton became the NFL's all-time leading rusher with 16,726 yards. But it was his qualities as a human being that were even more impressive to those who knew him.

"I was trying to think of words that mean Walter Payton to me," Mrs. McCaskey said, "and the first one that comes to mind is excellence. The second one is class, and the third one is fun because that was a big part of everyone's contact with Walter in one way or another."

--Larry Mayer

JARRETT PAYTON'S STATEMENT

"These last 12 months have been extremely tough on our family, but through these difficult times we've learned a lot about life and love. My family and I want to say thank you to the many, many people who have made life a little easier for us. From the day in February when my dad told the world of his liver disease, the outpouring of love, support and prayers from around the world astounded even him.

"We want to make a special point to thank the many doctors, nurses and staff at the Mayo Clinic and Midwest Treatment Center for the care they offered my dad and the hand-holding they offered us.

"We also want to thank the management of the Chicago Bears for their support, which for 25 years made him feel special. They looked out for my dad and his family, and we will not forget it.

"Thanks, too, to the Bears teammates that called and came by so regularly to boost his spirits. They say it is tough to understand the "family" relationship that exists between teammates. I understand that more today than ever.

"Finally, our greatest thanks go out to the people of Chicago. You adopted my dad and made him yours. He loved you all. You have made this our home. We are proud to be among you."

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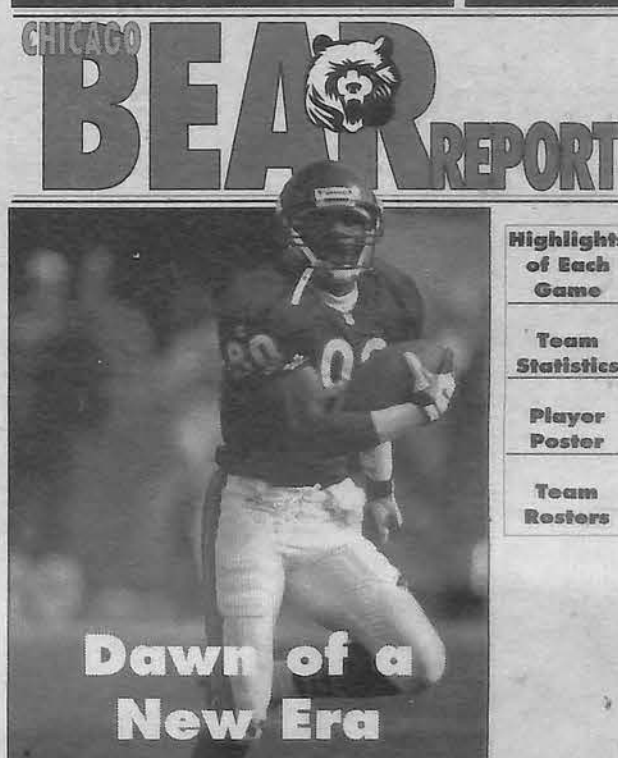
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But not before one last bit of mischief. There was Sweetness, ever the prankster, pointing Suhey to the wrong houses and having him ring the doorbells of strangers, though Payton knew full well where Singletary lived. Why? Just to see how Suhey would react, like the old days in Lake Forest when he would pretend to be the team receptionist and answer phone calls.

By nightfall, his son, Jarrett, was bravely appearing at a Halas Hall news conference to thank us for supporting his father. Our tears won't dry anytime soon. They were as close as a father and son could be, with much of the bonding coming during the painful final months. Jarrett even became a running back at the University of Miami, wanting to follow in his father's trail after so many years when both resisted the idea of football. Now there he was, mature beyond his teen

He had a magnetism that was infectious, as Bears matriarch Virginia McCaskey said in what resembled an



Jay Mariotti is a columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times.



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Payton's final days

"He was in a lot of pain, but he had the people he wanted around him. It was nice."

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Walter Payton spent his final days in bed slipping in and out of consciousness while surrounded by family, close friends and three pastors.

That's how the scene at Payton's South Barrington home was described by author Don Yaeger in a Sports Illustrated cover story this week. Yaeger spent a great deal of time with Payton since meeting him in August, working on the Hall of Famer's autobiography. The book, due out next fall, is titled "Never Die Easy," a reference to a 1984 quote about Payton's relentless running style.

The title obviously is appropriate for other reasons. Two weeks before his death, Payton told Yaeger that he would beat the staggering odds stacked against him and survive.

"They're going to write about me in medical journals," Payton reportedly predicted.

In the SI article, Yaeger reveals that Payton learned he had cancer during a visit to the Mayo Clinic in May. He was there to take a physical because he was close to becoming eligible for a liver

transplant, but an exam revealed a malignant tumor in his bile ducts, preventing him from receiving the life-saving transplant.

Although he was devastated by the news, Payton never lost his positive attitude.

"I don't feel sorry for myself because that's the first step toward giving up, and I'm not giving up," Payton said three weeks before his death, according to SI.

Yaeger reports that Payton requested to be taken home from the hospital Oct. 26 after his kidneys had shut down. Given 24 to 48 hours to live, he defied the odds for six more days.

"The fact that he lived the extra days was a testament to his will," Yaeger told the Chicago Tribune.

When Yaeger first met Payton, the NFL's all-time leading rusher weighed only 140 pounds.

"I know I was shocked the first time I saw him, but he didn't feel sorry for himself or his condition," Yaeger said. "He seemed at peace, I will tell you that."

Yaeger once asked Payton if he ever felt like yelling at God about his plight.

"He said, 'Are you serious? Something good is going to come of this. I just

haven't figured out what it is yet.'" Yaeger said. "He would alternate between saying, 'I'm not mad' to saying this wasn't the end."

During his final hours, Payton was surrounded by his wife, Connie, their children, Jarrett and Brittney, his brother, Eddie, former teammates Matt Suhey and Mike Singletary, and close friend Kevin Kelly.

"He would come to and say some things, but that was about it," Kelly told the Chicago Sun-Times. "But he could hear you."

"He was in a lot of pain, but he had the people he wanted around him," Yaeger told the Tribune. "It was nice."

Since publicly revealing he was suffering from a rare liver disease in February, Payton received more than 30,000 cards and letters from well-wishers in the United States and 17 other countries. The outpouring of affection had a profound impact on him.

"The love that people, the fans, have shown through letters and phone calls makes me cry," Payton said in the SI article. "Those letters keep me going."

The SI story also discusses Payton's battle against the fatal disease.



Walter Payton

"I've had a lot of days that start good but don't end that way," Payton told Yaeger three weeks ago. "It makes it hard to plan anything, hard to keep the schedule I used to keep. I love people and I think they can feel that. ... I wouldn't wish this situation on anyone, but I've found real peace and I understand the impact athletes have on people. Those athletes who say they're not role models and that they don't care never want to have that discussion with me."

Yaeger's book will be published by Random House and features passages of quotes from Payton plus recollections from Singletary, Mike Ditka and Jim McMahon, to name a few.

"He intended the book to be inspirational," Yaeger said. "He made me promise that it wouldn't depress people. He said, 'Make sure people get a lot of good out of this story.'"

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"Walter exemplified class, and all of us in sports should honor him by striving to perpetuate his standard of excellence. The tremendous grace and dignity he displayed in his final months reminded us again why 'Sweetness' was the perfect nickname for Walter Payton."

NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue

"When I came into the league I looked up to him, not only as a player, but how he handled himself as a person. He will be missed by everyone who was fortunate to have known him."

Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino

"Walter Payton was an inspiration to me by the way he carried himself on the field and off the field."

Dallas Cowboys running back Emmitt Smith

"As far as I'm concerned, I thought he was the greatest. With the teams he played on, and what he did, missing only one to two games his whole career. And, on top of that, he was just a great guy."

Hall of Fame running back Franco Harris

"He was a great guy, a great human being, a very giving person. It's a real tragedy. We've lost a great man and one of the all-time great football players in the National Football League."

Indianapolis Colts coach Jim Mora

"Walter is a great man. He was heavily involved in charitable activities, came into Chicago from a small town, small school, not as well known and really always made a great contribution to the community."

Minnesota Vikings coach Dennis Green

Durability a Payton trait

Hall of Famer played with fractured rib, other injuries

By Melissa Isaacson
Special to Bear Report

It is one of the crueler ironies of Walter Payton's death that in his prime as an NFL running back, he was not merely one of the most gifted, but the strongest, toughest and most durable players of his time.

Only once in his 13-year NFL career did Payton miss a game, held out against his will at Pittsburgh with a sprained ankle his rookie year.

"He was so upset," said former trainer Fred Caito. "He was mad at me, the coach and everybody else. I remember thinking, this guy is never going to be held out of another football game."

Caito's voice cracked Monday as he recalled his relationship with Payton, one that began with Caito marveling at the persistence of a stubborn rookie and ended with Caito weeping at the loss of his friend.

"When I left the Bears," he said of his dismissal three years ago, "the first phone call I got that night was from Walter. We

talked for an hour. He was a true friend off the field, always there when you needed him."

And always there for his team. "He played with colds, fever, his knees filled with fluid, swollen elbows, a fractured rib," Caito said.

One off-season, Caito accompanied him to Minneapolis for arthroscopic surgery on both knees.

"There were doctors from around the country observing the procedure, but we used a different name so no one knew it was Walter," Caito recalled. "His knees were so bad, they worked on each one for over an hour and a half. Afterward, one of the doctors said, 'Geez, that guy looked like he had been through a train wreck.' They were amazed when they found out who he was."

The following summer, Payton rehabbed at home and did not practice all summer.

"Coach Ditka was a little upset," Caito said. "He kept saying to me, 'Are we going to have this guy or not?' Well, finally he got a couple of practices in and the first time he touched the ball in the opening game, he went about 60 yards for a touchdown."

Payton was famous for his unorthodox training techniques, which included running up and down a hill near his home. Clyde Emrich, who was the team's strength coach throughout Payton's career, recalls letting the player dictate his own training regimen.



Walter Payton's dedication to conditioning contributed to his almost unprecedented durability.

"When I see chrome-plated parts, I wasn't going to mess with it," Emrich said. "He knew what he was doing."

Emrich recalled Payton once playing

Payton's NFL Records

- Career rushing yards: 16,726
- Rushing yards in a game: 275 vs. Minnesota, Nov. 20, 1977
- Career carries: 3,838
- Consecutive seasons leading NFL in carries: 4 (1976-79)
- 1,000-yard rushing seasons: 10
- 100-yard rushing games: 77
- Career attempts (rushing and receiving): 4,638
- Yards gained (rushing and receiving): 21,803

through a hamstring pull.

"I walked into the weight room and almost fell over," Emrich said. "He was doing repetitive dead lifts with 525 pounds with a hamstring pull. I said, 'You know, that's not the best thing for your hamstring,' and he said, 'I'm all right.'"

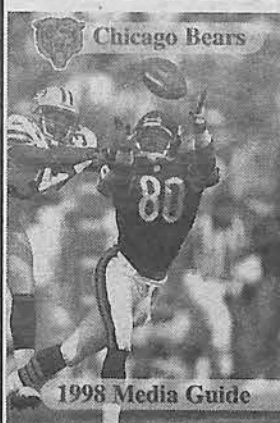
But as with Caito, it was Payton's humanity off the field that meant the most to Emrich and will stay with him the longest.

"I felt good every time I saw him, that he thought enough to come over and talk to me," said Emrich. "There was such an aura about him but he was like that with everyone. He was a wonderful man."

"They should build two bronzed statues. One of George Halas and one of Walter Payton. That tells the Chicago Bears right there. Everything right there."

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Tough times for Payton's family

DOUG BUFFONE



The toughest thing about Walter Payton dying at such a young age is that he leaves a family behind him. You look at his wife and their two children and you hope somehow they can make it through this very emotional and difficult time.

When you look at Walter as a football player, there was simply none better. I was his teammate for his first five seasons in the league, and I knew right away he was something special. How did I know? Because when he came to training camp in 1975 he ran right over me twice.

The thing that impressed me so much about Walter was how he punished defenders who tried to tackle him. He was always the one to deliver the blow with a stiff arm or a shoulder. In the beginning I knew he was a very physical player, but my only concern was how long he would

last in the league with that type of style.

Well, he lasted for 13 years and missed only one game—and he always felt a coach's decision was the only thing that kept him from having an unblemished record of durability. He didn't run with all the jukes and the fakes like Barry Sanders. On Walter's best runs, he ran over not one but two and three tacklers at the very least.

One thing that made him even more special was his ability to block. Most backs didn't even want to block, and here you have the NFL's all-time leading rusher who took pride in his blocking. Remember the block he laid on a linebacker to allow Jim McMahon to complete a bomb to Willie Gault in that memorable Thursday night game at Minnesota in 1985? That was typical Walter.

He could do so many different things so well. He could also catch the ball—he's the Bears' all-time leader with 492 receptions—he could throw the ball, and he could return it. Do you realize he threw eight touchdown passes and averaged 31.7 yards on 17 kickoff returns? Talk about a complete player.

Like many others, I always thought Walter was indestructible. He proved that on the field. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case off the field. I thought it would turn out like a Hollywood movie: Hero of the game has liver problem, gets transplant,



Walter Payton made a habit out of running over tacklers, as Denver linebacker Tom Jackson discovers.

and fights his way back to where he was before. I always thought that in the fourth quarter, you gave him the ball and he'd score the important touchdown. That was Walter. It's just a tragedy that it didn't turn out that way in his battle with cancer.

Of course, he leaves a tremendous legacy as a football player and a person. No one individual better symbolizes the Chicago Bears, and the awareness he created of the state's organ donor program is truly amazing.

Walter's reputation as a prankster is well known, and I remember once he turned me into an accessory. We were in training camp, and he bursts into my room at one in the morning proudly displaying a

pair of cherry bombs. He wanted to put a scare into our trainer, Fred Caito, and he talked me into helping him. I lifted Walter up and he placed the cherry bombs on Fred's window. Well, it nearly blew up the entire building, the fire alarms were going off, and we ran as fast as we could away from the place. No one ever knew who did it, but I'm sure they had a good idea.

As much fun as Walter had off the field, when it was time to play, he buckled it up. He ran for 275 yards on 40 carries against Minnesota to set the NFL record, which is just remarkable as far as I'm concerned. Entire teams don't do that in two games. I remember thinking during that game that he was going to run out of steam. Well, that never happened. As a matter of fact, he kept getting stronger.

The debate about whether Walter or Jim Brown was the greatest running back of all time rages on. But I'll tell you that Jim Brown never blocked like Walter. And you have to ask yourself: Who has the most yards, played for the most years, and was the most durable? The answer is Walter Payton. I think he has an edge over everybody who played the game because of his amazing longevity.

Walter is certainly going to be missed, and not only by his ex-teammates. In fact, I've never seen such a response to one person like this throughout the country. Even Wilt Chamberlain didn't get this when he passed away. Walter meant something to millions of people throughout the country, and that in itself is quite a tribute.

Doug Buffone hosts the Doug Buffone Sports Magazine Sunday mornings on Fox Sports Chicago.

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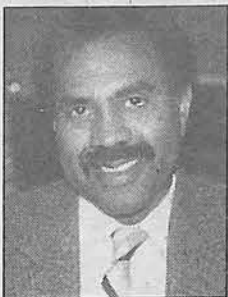
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Like a ton of bricks

News of Payton's death hard for legion of fans to accept

FRED MITCHELL



Opposing defenses usually knew when Walter Payton was going to get the ball, yet he still would hit them like a ton of bricks.

That's pretty much how the news of Payton's passing hit me — like a ton of bricks.

We all knew this day likely loomed; for weeks we had heard rumors of his deteriorating health. But the news still hits like a ton of bricks.

Walter and I shared an amusing bond. After his Super Bowl XX ring was stolen, Payton would look at my Wittenberg University Football Hall of Fame ring admiringly. Coincidentally, I wore No. 34 at Wittenberg and that number is engraved on the side of the ring. When Walter would shake my hand, crushing it with his ironclad grip, he would use his other hand to try to wrest my ring off my finger.

"Give me that No. 34 ring!" he would demand.

Less than two weeks ago, a special tribute to Payton was held during the ARETE Courage in Sports awards at Navy Pier.

The award winners included athletes who had overcome cancer and a woman who had brain surgery and also lost her daughter in the Columbine High School shootings in Colorado. At the end of the night, the Life Award went to Payton.

Payton was unable to attend, but his wife, Connie, and their 14-year-old daughter, Brittney, accepted for him. Hall of Fame running backs Eric Dickerson, Tony Dorsett and Marcus Allen also attended, as well as current Atlanta Falcons back Jamal Anderson.

"Just to have some of the greatest players in our sport be on hand was special," said Dennis McKinnon, a Payton teammate on the Bears' Super Bowl team. "Being there for Walter when he broke Jim Brown's record (in 1984), and watching (his son) Jarrett grow up and having the opportunity to escort Connie and Brittney ... that was special for me."

"When I would call Walter, he just said: 'Dennis, come by and see me. We'll go to church.'"

Connie Payton urged the audience to become organ donors during the 10th year for the ARETE Awards for courage in sports, which benefit Special Olympics Illinois. The show will air on ESPN on Nov. 10 at 7 p.m.

Other honorees included cyclist Lance Armstrong, who overcame testicular cancer to win the Tour de France; Erin Marie Johnson, a star high school basketball player whose left arm ends at her elbow; Gerry Bloch, at 81 the oldest man to climb the 3,500-foot El Capitan peak in Yosemite National Park; and Dawn Anna, the volleyball coach at Columbine High School, whose daughter died in the shooting.

Former teammates Jim McMahon and Richard Dent were there to honor Payton at the dinner.

"It's sad to see a guy who meant so much go through this," Dorsett said. "That's life, the reality of it. I sent Walter a little note when I first heard of the situation. It really touched me. If I had to walk, I'd have been here tonight."

Dickerson remembered his second year



Walter Payton's work ethic, determination and relentless pursuit of excellence were admired by many.

in the NFL, 1984. The Los Angeles Rams played against Payton and the Bears.

"I never watched other players play," he said. "But with him, I actually stood on the sideline and watched."

Days before his death, McKinnon issued a personal plea.

"I would love for some of us from the Super Bowl team and some of us who blocked for him all those years, and maybe some people from the city and officials in the state ... I would like to see us do something in his honor at Soldier Field. I would like to be able to do something that is reminiscent of what he has meant to this city and for this league. Something that we can do every year, and honor all those kids that he represented as a spokesman for the National Football League and United Way and the Halas-Payton Foundation."

Payton touched millions of youngsters and fans who admired him, as well as media members fortunate enough to cover him. We all admired his work ethic, his determination, his relentless pursuit of excellence. To that extent, we all are blessed at this difficult time.

Fred Mitchell is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

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Enis a Payton fan as youth

Now following in footsteps as Bear

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

One current player who idolized Walter Payton during his youth still can't believe he's following in the legend's footsteps as the starting tailback for the Chicago Bears.

As a high school athlete, Curtis Enis would drag his brother over to a golf course near their Ohio home and run up and down a steep hill—just like Payton did in suburban Arlington Heights.

"You hear everybody talk about somebody they idolized and wanted to be like, and I was in that same mold," Enis said days after Payton's death. "My brother and I saw the highlight tape when we were younger and we were in high school running the hills. We went to the country club and the owner said, 'Just don't get your cleats on the greens.'"

"Dreaming of being a freshman athlete, I never thought I'd be here being a Chicago Bear and then playing in a fraternity where he's the president and the leader."

Enis felt a special bond with Payton that few current players enjoyed. When the Bears were considering whether to draft Enis, with their first pick in 1998, it was Payton who took him out to break-

fast during a visit to Chicago.

"I spent more time in awe of him looking at him, and he just kept talking, his (cell) phone kept ringing," Enis said. "I'd call him Mr. Payton and he'd punch me in the arm and say, 'Walter.'"

When Enis wanted to lose weight but not strength following major knee surgery, Payton faxed him a detailed account of the workout the Hall of Famer followed en route to becoming the NFL's all-time leading rusher.



Curtis Enis

"It was the hardest thing I've ever seen," Enis said. "It doesn't even compare to any workout I've ever seen in my life. I

don't know how he did it.

"I believed in it, but I wasn't probably up to his level. I really appreciate him giving that to me."

Payton's death hit the team's other current running backs just as hard. James Allen called it a "personal loss."

"Being a Bear running back, it really hit home," Allen said. "I think a lot of us kept our distance from him during his sickness, and that's something I regret—not getting the chance to talk to him."

"It hits home when you think about all the things he's done, when you think about the level of play he's set for every running back. ... Not just for us, but run-

ning backs worldwide—from high school to college to the pros."

Glyn Milburn grew up in California, admiring Payton from a distance.

"Like most kids growing up watching him on television, seeing him break all the tackles, seeing all the highlights over and over again, they never get boring," Milburn said. "And the kind of player he was on the field didn't even compare to the person he was off the field."

"I only met him one time. I saw him on the sideline of a game (in 1998) and he came up to me and said, 'You're doing great.' And he didn't have to do that, but he did that a lot. Everyone you talk to has the same recollection of Walter Payton."

Many Bears players have indicated they are dedicating the rest of the season to Payton. But head coach Dick Jauron said not even that honor would do justice to the memory of "Sweetness."

"We don't have any intention of dedicating a single game or a season," Jauron said.

"We feel like his presence and his example should lead us through the future. I don't look at one game. He certainly played every play as hard as he could, and that's what we're trying to get to, and he's a great example of that. For us to make it a single game or even a season, I don't think is a worthwhile gesture or a gesture that certainly would do him justice. You'd like to play with his spirit, his dedication and his effort over the course of a whole career."

Fourth pick was No. 1 with Bears

Hindsight may be 20/20, but the Bears apparently had X-ray vision on Jan. 28, 1975 when they drafted Jackson State running back Walter Payton with the fourth overall pick.

The next day, head coach Jack Pardee revealed the Bears would have taken Payton even if they had Atlanta's No. 1 pick. "Yes, higher even than California quarterback Steve Bartkowski," screamed a columnist in the *Chicago Tribune*.

The Falcons chose Bartkowski, and the Cowboys followed by taking Maryland defensive tackle Randy White. Then the Colts, who were reportedly interested in Payton, selected North Carolina guard Ken Huff.

At that point, Pardee said "a nice cheer went up."

"We've been sweating it out all night," the coach said at the time. "What happened is what we were hoping for."

The *Tribune* discussed how "Payton's addition raised immediate doubts about the future of Carl Garrett with the Bears." You think?

Payton played 13 remarkable seasons with the Bears, finishing his career as the NFL's all-time leading rusher with 16,726 yards.

"When I get through with Chicago they'll be loving me," Payton predicted the day he was drafted. "I'm glad I went that high in the draft. I hadn't really given much thought about who I was going with. I know Chicago is a nice place. I know it's cold in Chicago."

—Larry Mayer



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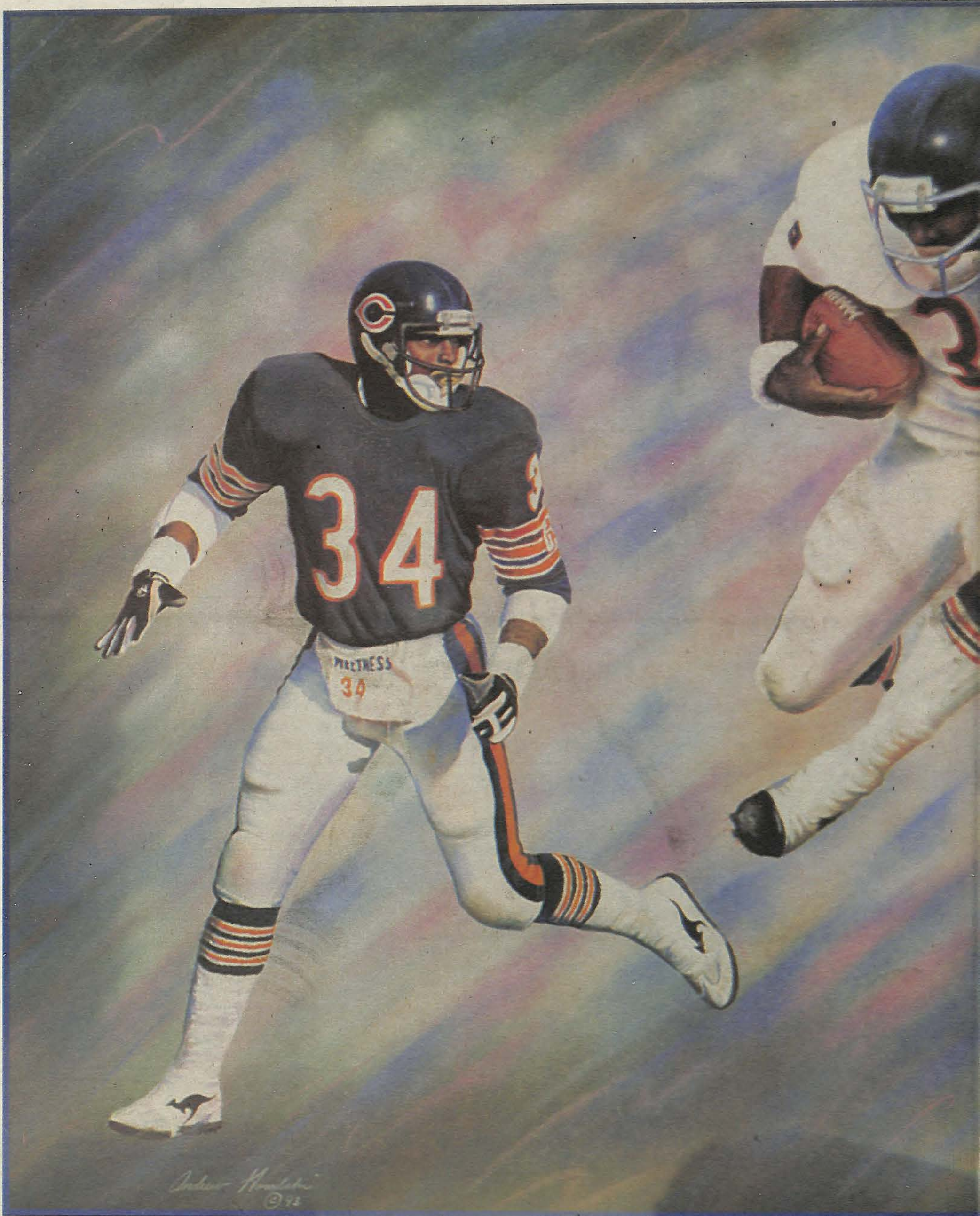
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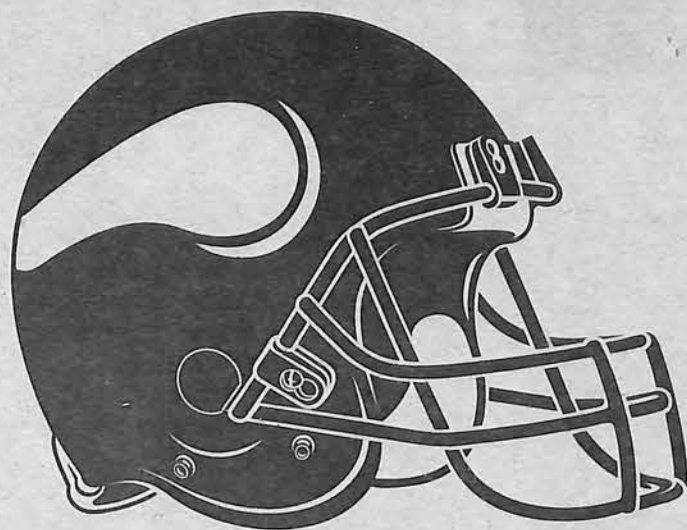
Walter Payton

1954-1999





GAME PREVIEW



MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Facts and Figures

Kickoff: Noon (ct), Sunday, Nov. 14
Site: Soldier Field
Capacity: 66,944
Playing surface: Natural grass
Last meeting: Bears won 24-22 on Oct. 10, 1999 at the Metrodome. Chicago's defense forced five turnovers and kept the explosive Vikings offense out of the end zone until a meaningless TD with :02 left in the game. Sean Harris recovered a fumble in the end zone for his first career TD and Shane Matthews passed for two scores before leaving the game with a pulled hamstring.
Series history: Bears trail 41-34-2 and have lost three straight at Soldier Field.



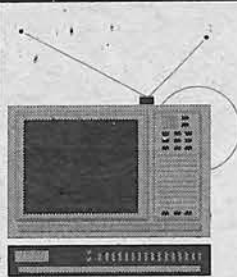
CHICAGO BEARS

at

ON THE AIR

Television:

The Fox Network will televise the game live to a regional audience.



Radio:

WMAQ-AM (670) will carry the game live with Gary Bender, Hub Arkush and Tom Thayer announcing.



Who rates the advantage?

By Kelly Quain

		Positions	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quarterback	Jeff George won first two games after replacing Cunningham.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Running Back	Enis 1 of 5 in NFL to have 300 yards rushing, 200 receiving.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wide Receiver	Moss, Carter, Reed combine for 106 catches, 10 TDs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tight End	Andrew Glover (21 catches) benefits from talent at wideout.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Offensive Line	Bears struggling in running game, averaging 3.3 per carry.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Defensive Line	Bears rate small edge away from fast track at Metrodome.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linebacker	Barry Minter sack, fumble recovery, INT. vs. Vikes in Week 5.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Secondary	Only because Bears have been baffled by Big Three in past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Special Teams	Berger avg. 49.3 on punts, has 9 touchbacks on kickoffs.

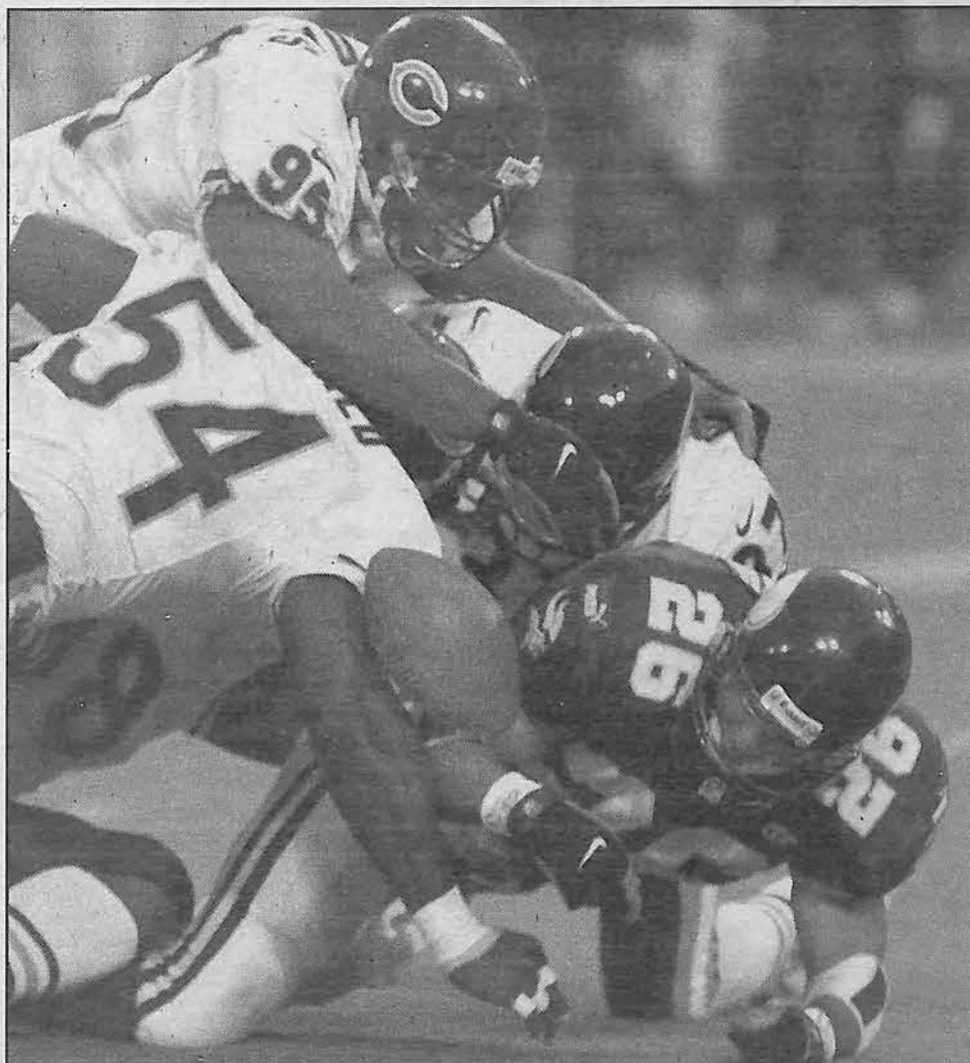


Photo by Andy King

The Bears defense roughed up Robert Smith and the Vikings in a 24-22 Week 5 win, but Minnesota is a different team since changing quarterbacks.

George revitalizes struggling Vikings

By Kelly Quain
 Bear Report Correspondent

After a sluggish 2-4 start, Minnesota has re-fueled and turned on the afterburners.

The Vikes are 2-0 since Dennis Green replaced Randall Cunningham with Jeff George, who has the offense looking more like it did in 1998 when it set a NFL record for points.

George has been able to spread the ball around among the team's many weapons, including ageless wide receiver Cris Carter, who had eight catches for 144 yards in a 23-20 win at Denver in Week 8. He had five receptions for 87 yards and a touchdown in the final quarter.

Carter's 24-yard reception in the final seconds set up Gary Anderson's game-winning field goal. Carter leads the club in receptions (46), receiving yards (601) and touchdowns (5).

Randy Moss has recovered from his so-called slow start, and has 35 grabs for 553 yards (15.8 average) and four TDs. Jake Reed (25 catches, 407 yards) and tight end Andrew Glover (21-253) round out the Vikings' fifth-ranked pass offense.

Minnesota has turned to Leroy Hoard as its featured running back, a role the 10-year veteran hasn't been in since 1994

with Cleveland. Hoard is filling in for Robert Smith, who is not expected to return and recover from hernia surgery until later this month.

The Vikings complement Hoard's pounding style with fleet-footed David Palmer, who did not play against the Bears in the teams' first meeting in Week 5.

In that game, the Vikings were kept out of the end zone until Chris Walsh scored on an 18-yard pass play with two seconds remaining. Gary Anderson had five field goals in the 24-22 loss to Chicago, the Bears' first win in five tries against Minnesota.

George, who signed as a free agent in the offseason, isn't the only reason for the Vikings resurgence. Minnesota has five takeaways in its last two games, including three interceptions against Denver. Also, the Vikes have 11 sacks in their last three games after posting nine in their first five.

Minnesota's weakness is its secondary, as evidenced by the team's ranking of 29th against the pass. Only two of team's four interceptions are by a defensive back -- free safety Orlando Thomas, who visited Chicago as a free agent in the offseason.

Linebacker Dwayne Rudd has more pass breakups (5) than Minnesota's two starting cornerbacks combined. Jimmy Hitchcock has one, Kenny Wright none.



MINNESOTA VIKINGS

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
1	Gary Anderson	K	5-11	179	40	18	Syracuse
3	Jeff George	QB	6-4	215	31	10	Illinois
7	Randall Cunningham	QB	6-4	215	36	14	UNLV
8	Todd Bouman	QB	6-2	211	27	2	St. Cloud St.
12	Daunte Culpepper	QB	6-4	255	22	R	Central Florida
17	Mitch Berger	P	6-2	217	27	4	Colorado
20	Kenny Wright	CB	6-1	200	22	R	Northwestern St.
21	Moe Williams	RB	6-1	200	25	4	Kentucky
22	David Palmer	RB	5-8	173	26	6	Alabama
24	Robert Griffith	S	5-11	195	28	5	San Diego St.
26	Robert Smith	RB	6-2	212	27	7	Ohio St.
29	Chris Rogers	CB	5-10	192	22	R	Howard
32	Anthony Bass	DB	6-1	203	24	2	Bethune-Cookman
33	Harold Morrow	FB	5-11	217	26	4	Auburn
37	Jimmy Hitchcock	CB	5-10	187	28	5	North Carolina
42	Orlando Thomas	S	6-1	214	26	5	SW Louisiana
43	Andrew Jordan	TE	6-6	272	27	6	Western Carolina
44	Leroy Hoard	RB	5-11	224	31	10	Michigan
45	John Henry Mills	FB	6-0	222	29	7	Wake Forest
51	Rob Holmberg	LB	6-3	230	28	6	Penn St.
52	Kailee Wong	LB	6-2	257	23	2	Stanford
53	Kivusama Mays	LB	6-3	250	24	2	North Carolina
55	Corey Miller	LB	6-2	245	31	9	South Carolina
56	Chris Doleman	LB	6-5	287	38	15	Pittsburgh
57	Dwayne Rudd	LB	6-2	238	23	3	Alabama
58	Ed McDaniel	LB	5-11	230	30	8	Clemson
60	Cory Withrow	C	6-2	282	24	1	Washington State
62	Jeff Christy	C	6-3	285	30	7	Pittsburgh
63	Corbin Lacinia	G	6-4	297	28	6	Augustana
64	Randall McDaniel	G	6-3	287	34	12	Arizona St.
67	Jay Humphrey	T	6-6	322	23	R	Texas
68	Mike Morris	C	6-5	272	38	13	N.E. Missouri St.
71	David Dixon	G	6-5	352	30	6	Arizona St.
73	Todd Steussie	T	6-6	316	28	6	California
75	Joe Phillips	DT	6-5	334	36	14	Southern Methodist
77	Korey Stringer	T	6-4	335	25	5	Ohio St.
78	Matt Birk	T	6-4	310	23	2	Harvard
80	Cris Carter	WR	6-3	214	33	13	Ohio St.
81	Chris Walsh	WR	6-1	199	30	7	Stanford
82	Andrew Glover	TE	6-6	252	32	9	Grambling
83	Robert Tate	WR	5-10	186	25	3	Cincinnati
84	Randy Moss	WR	6-4	202	22	2	Marshall
85	Jim Kleinsasser	TE	6-3	272	22	R	North Dakota
86	Jake Reed	WR	6-3	216	31	9	Grambling
87	Carlester Crumpler	TE	6-6	260	28	6	East Carolina
89	Matthew Hatchette	WR	6-2	198	25	3	Langston
91	John Burrough	DE	6-5	275	27	5	Wyoming
92	Duane Clemons	DE	6-5	272	25	4	California
93	John Randle	DT	6-1	283	31	10	Texas A&I
94	Tony Williams	DT	6-1	285	24	3	Memphis
95	Martin Harrison	DE	6-5	285	31	8	Washington
96	Jerry Ball	DT	6-1	330	34	13	Southern Methodist
97	Talance Sawyer	DE	6-2	252	23	R	UNLV
Injured Reserve							
56	Pete Bercich	LB	6-1	239	27	5	Notre Dame
Physically Unable To Perform							
23	Torrian Gray	S	6-0	200	25	3	Virginia Tech
Practice Squad							
31	Don Morgan	S	5-11	190	23	R	Nevada-Reno
54	Mike Parker	LB	6-1	230	24	1	Houston
76	Chris Liwienski	OL	6-5	308	24	2	Indiana
25	Carlos Jones	CB	5-11	180	26	1	Miami
50	Antico Dalton	LB	6-1	241	23	R	Hampton

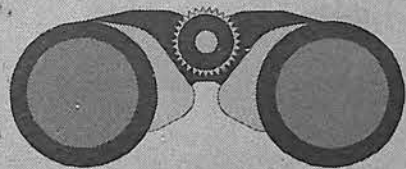


CHICAGO BEARS

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
8	Cade McNown	QB	6-1	213	22	R	UCLA
9	Shane Matthews	QB	6-3	196	29	6	Florida
15	Jim Miller	QB	6-2	218	28	6	Michigan State
16	Todd Sauerbrun	P/KO	5-10	209	25	4	West Virginia
18	Chris Boniol	PK	5-11	167	27	6	Louisiana Tech
20	James Allen	RB	5-10	215	24	2	Oklahoma
21	Terry Cousin	CB	5-9	182	24	3	South Carolina
23	Jerry Azumah	DB	5-10	195	22	R	New Hampshire
24	Glyn Milburn	RB/KR	5-8	174	28	7	Stanford
25	Tom Carter	CB	6-0	190	27	7	Notre Dame
27	Walt Harris	CB	5-11	195	25	4	Mississippi State
29	Frankie Smith	S	5-9	182	30	7	Baylor
32	Edgar Bennett	RB	6-0	218	30	8	Florida State
36	Ray Austin	S	5-11	204	24	3	Tennessee
37	Tony Parrish	S	5-10	206	23	2	Washington
44	Curtis Enis	RB	6-0	240	23	2	Penn State
47	Chris Hudson	S	5-10	199	27	5	Colorado
49	Ty Hallock	FB	6-2	254	28	7	Michigan State
52	Keith Burns	LB	6-2	245	27	6	Oklahoma St.
53	Warrick Holdman	LB	6-1	238	23	R	Texas A&M
54	Ricardo McDonald	LB	6-2	252	29	8	Pittsburgh
55	Sean Harris	LB	6-3	252	27	5	Arizona
57	Olin Kreutz	C	6-2	295	22	2	Washington
58	Chris Villarrial	C/G	6-4	310	26	4	Indiana (Pa.)
59	Rosevelt Colvin	DE	6-3	260	22	R	Purdue
60	Casey Wiegmann	C	6-3	295	24	4	Iowa
64	Rex Tucker	OL	6-5	300	22	R	Texas A&M
65	Patrick Mannely	T/LS	6-5	285	24	2	Duke
67	Greg Huntington	C/G	6-3	300	28	7	Penn State
70	Ken Anderson	DT	6-3	310	23	1	Arkansas
71	James Williams	T	6-7	340	31	9	Cheyney State
73	Dan Palmer	G	6-4	290	26	1	Air Force
75	Todd Perry	G	6-5	308	28	7	Kentucky
78	Blake Brockermeyer	T	6-4	312	26	5	Texas
79	Jerry Wisne	T	6-6	308	23	R	Notre Dame
80	Curtis Conway	WR	6-0	194	28	7	USC
81	Bobby Engram	WR	5-10	192	26	4	Penn State
83	Macey Brooks	WR	6-5	215	24	1	James Madison
84	John Allred	TE	6-4	249	25	3	USC
85	Alonzo Mayes	TE	6-4	268	24	2	Oklahoma State
86	Marty Booker	WR	5-11	215	23	R	NE Louisiana
87	D'Wayne Bates	WR	6-2	215	23	R	Northwestern
88	Marcus Robinson	WR	6-3	215	24	2	South Carolina
89	Ryan Wethight	TE	6-2	236	28	7	Stanford
90	Van Tuinei	DE	6-4	275	29	3	Arizona
91	Khari Samuel	LB	6-3	242	22	R	Massachusetts
92	Barry Minter	LB	6-2	245	29	7	Tulsa
94	Shahe Burton	DL	6-6	305	25	4	Tennessee
95	Russell Davis	DL	6-4	295	24	R	North Carolina
96	Clyde Simmons	DE	6-5	292	35	14	W. Carolina
97	Mike Wells	DT	6-3	315	28	7	Iowa
98	Bryan Robinson	DL	6-4	295	25	3	Fresno State
99	Jim Flanigan	DT	6-2	288	28	6	Notre Dame
Practice squad							
26	Jermaine Jones	CB	5-8	183	23	R	Northwestern St.
43	Damon Washington	RB	5-11	193	22	R	Colorado State
45	Scott Dragos	FB	6-2	255	23	1	Boston College
82	Sulecio Sanford	WR	5-10	190	23	R	Mid. Tenn. St.
93	Marlon Chambers	TE	6-8	295	25	R	Louisiana Tech
Injured Reserve							
1	Jeff Jaeger	PK	5-11	190	34	14	Washington
22	Dorian Brew	DB	5-10	182	25	2	Kansas
38	Jim Cantelupe	S	6-0	195	24	1	West Point
69	Chad Overhauser	G	6-4	316	24	1	UCLA
74	Jimmy Herndon	T	6-8	318	26	4	Houston

Ages as of Opening Day, 1999

What to Watch



The Bears will try to sweep the season series from Minnesota for the first time since 1995, and only the third time since '87.

The teams have headed in opposite directions since the Bears upset the Vikings 24-22 in the Metrodome in Week 5. Chicago followed that surprising victory with a losing streak, while quarterback Jeff George helped resuscitate the Vikings and their playoff hopes.

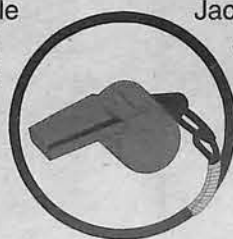
The Bears offense was running smoothly until quarterback Shane Matthews was injured in the first meeting between the clubs.

MEET THE COACHES

Dennis Green



Dennis Green, 50, is in his eighth season as Vikings head coach. He is 75-45 overall, 2-6 in the postseason. Green has guided Minnesota to the playoffs in six of his seven seasons, including the NFC title game last year. He served as head coach at Stanford (1989-91) and Northwestern (1981-85), as well as receivers coach with the San Francisco 49ers.



Dick Jauron



Dick Jauron, 48, is 3-5 in his first season as Bears head coach. He became only the third Bears rookie coach to win his season opener. In four seasons as defensive coordinator of the Jacksonville Jaguars, the Jaguars won 35 games and reached the playoffs three times including a trip to the AFC Championship Game in 1996. Jauron played safety for eight NFL seasons (1973-80).

Recent Meetings

Date	Winner (Site)
1999	Bears 24-22 (M)
1998	Vikings 48-22 (M)
	Vikings 31-28 (S)
1997	Vikings 29-22 (M)
	Vikings 27-24 (S)
1996	Bears 15-13 (M)
	Vikings 20-14 (S)
1995	Bears 14-6 (M)
	Bears 31-14 (S)
1994	Bears 35-18 (M, playoffs)
	Vikings 33-27 (M)
	Vikings 42-14 (S)
1993	Vikings 19-12 (S)
	Vikings 10-7 (M)
1992	Vikings 38-10 (S)
	Vikings 21-20 (M)
1991	Bears 34-17 (M)
	Bears 10-6 (S)
1990	Vikings 41-13 (M)
	Bears 19-16 (S)

Stadium codes: S (Soldier Field), M (Metrodome, Minneapolis)

KEY MATCHUPS

MARCUS ROBINSON

VS.

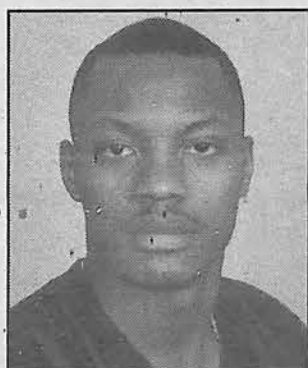
KENNY WRIGHT

Wright, a rookie out of Northwestern State, was inserted into the starting lineup three games ago, replacing Ramos McDonald. McDonald was benched late in the Oct. 10 loss to the Bears, walked out on the team last week and was subsequently released.

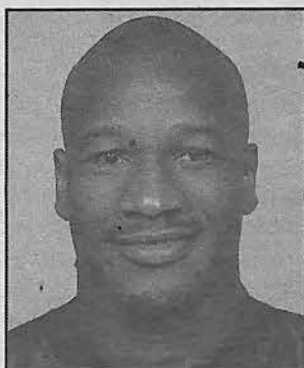
The 6-foot-1, 200-pound Wright has been solid at left corner, but the Vikings' pass defense (ranked 29th) continues to struggle as a whole. Wright's size should help him against Robinson, a 6-3, 215-pounder with great speed.

After playing just four games in two years, Robinson has emerged as the Bears' top receiver. He led the team in receiving four straight games, three of those as a starter in place of Curtis Conway (sprained ankle). Robinson's team-high 590 yards receiving if fifth in the NFC.

Robinson has become the favorite target of rookie quarterback Cade McNown. The two have combined for Chicago's three longest TD passes (80, 52 and 30 yards) and five of the team's six longest pass plays.



Marcus Robinson



Kenny Wright

TOM CARTER

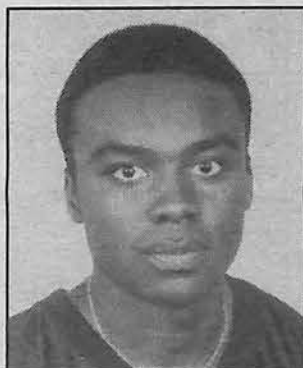
VS.

RANDY MOSS

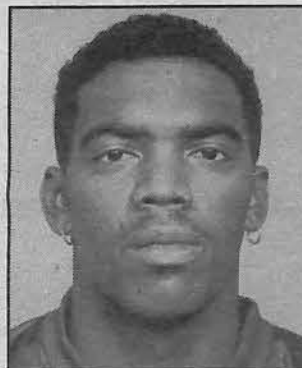
The Bears will have a tough decision to make on Carter at the end of the year if he doesn't play better in the second half of the season. Carter is scheduled to make \$2.4 million in 2000, with a cap value of \$3.3 million. Chicago coach Dick Jauron prefers cornerbacks that are more physical, which could eliminate Carter from the equation.

Carter is just one part of a struggling Bears secondary. The Bears rank 19th against the pass, and only three of the team's five interceptions are by defensive backs. Carter has as many pass-interference penalties (5) as he does pass breakups this season. Carter will have his hands full with Moss, although the Bears have the option of matching up Walt Harris against Moss wherever he lines up.

Moss has rebounded from a slow start and is second on the Vikings with 35 catches and 553 yards (15.8 average). His four touchdowns is second only to Cris Carter's five. In the Week 5 meeting between Minnesota and Chicago, Moss had eight catches for a game-high 122 yards.



Tom Carter



Randy Moss

SEAN HARRIS

VS.

LEROY HOARD

With Hoard replacing Robert Smith, the Bears' middle linebacker figures to be more of a factor against the Vikings than he was in Week 5. Hoard is a punishing, between-the-tackles type of runner, which will put the pressure on Harris to step up.

Of course, Harris' success is largely dependent upon the play of defensive tackles Mike Wells and Jim Flanigan, who in the Bears system are responsible for keeping the guards and center off the middle linebackers. Harris took a team-leading 46 tackles into the first Minnesota game, but he injured his ankle in the second half and hasn't been the same player since. Harris has 15 tackles in the last three games.

Minnesota turned to Hoard after Smith had surgery for a hernia, which is expected to sideline him until late November. Hoard was a featured back only once in his 10-year career, in 1994 with Cleveland. That was the only season he reached 200 carries.



Sean Harris



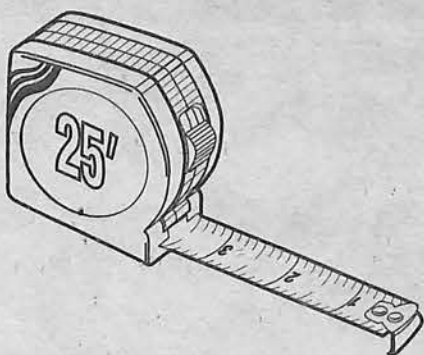
Leroy Hoard

WHEN THE BEARS HAVE THE BALL

RCB 37 HITCHCOCK 29 Rogers	FS 42 THOMAS 32 Bass	SS 24 GRIFFITH 32 Bass	LCB 20 WRIGHT 29 Rogers
RLB 57 RUDD 51 Holmberg	MLB 56 McDANIEL 53 Mays	LLB 52 WONG 55 Miller	
RE 56 DOLEMAN 95 Harrison 91 Burrough	RT 94 WILLIAMS 75 Phillips	LT 96 BALL 75 Phillips	LE 93 RANDLE 92 Clemons 97 Sawyer
WR 81 ENGRAM 88 Robinson 86 Booker	LT 78 BROCKERMAYER 79 Wisne 65 Mannelly	LG 75 PERRY 67 Huntington 79 Wisne	C 57 KREUTZ 60 Wiegmann
	RG 58 VILLARRIAL 64 Tucker	RT 71 WILLIAMS 73 Palmer	TE 85 MAYES 84 Allred 89 Wetnight
	QB 9 MATTHEWS 8 McNown 15 Miller	WR 80 CONWAY 83 Brooks 87 Bates	
	RB 44 ENIS 32 Bennett 20 J. Allen 24 Milburn	FB 49 HALLOCK 32 Bennett	

WHEN THE VIKINGS HAVE THE BALL

RCB 27 CARTER 21 Cousin	FS 47 HUDSON 29 Smith	SS 37 PARRISH 36 Austin	LCB 27 W. HARRIS 23 Azumah
WLB 92 MINTER 53 Holdman	MLB 55 S. HARRIS 52 Burns 91 Samuel	SLB 54 McDONALD 58 Colvin	
RE 95 DAVIS 96 Simmons 90 Tuinei	RT 97 WELLS 70 Anderson	LT 99 FLANIGAN 94 Burton	LE 98 ROBINSON 90 Tuinei
WR 84 MOSS 86 Reed 83 Tate	LT 73 STEUSSIE 67 Humphrey	LG 64 McDANIEL 63 Lacina	C 62 CHRISTY 60 Withrow
	RG 71 DIXON 78 Birk	RT 77 STRINGER 67 Humphrey	TE 82 GLOVER 87 Crumpler 85 Kleinsasser 43 Jordan
	QB 3 GEORGE 7 Cunningham 12 Culpepper 8 Bouman	WR 80 CARTER 89 Hatchette 81 Walsh	
	RB 44 HOARD 22 Palmer 21 Williams 26 Smith	FB 33 MORROW 45 Mills	



TALE OF THE TAPE

Minnesota Vikings
at
Chicago Bears
(Through Week 8)



OFFENSIVE RANKINGS

TOTAL OFFENSE	9	5
Rushing offense	24	19
Passing Offense	6	5
Total yards per play	22	4
Rushing average	23	10
Passing average	20	5
Percentage had intercepted	13	24
Sacks allowed per pass play	19	16
First downs per game	10	4 (t)
Third down efficiency	8	4
Fourth down efficiency	5	6 (t)
Punt return average	11	25
Kickoff return average	9	16
Gross punt average	17	1
Net punt average	27	1
Points per game	22	10
Field goal percentage	30 (t)	24 (t)

DEFENSIVE RANKINGS

TOTAL DEFENSE	26	27
Rushing defense	25	18
Passing defense	19	29
Total yards per play	27	26
Rushing average	31	22
Passing average	17	24
Percentage intercepted by	27	29
Sacks per pass play	15	20
First downs per game	21	29
Third down efficiency	12	24
Fourth down efficiency	5 (t)	15 (t)
Punt return average	15	17
Kickoff return average	6	15
Gross punt average	2	9
Net punt average	1	16
Points per game	18	16
Opponents' FG percentage	16 (t)	9

TURN BACK THE CLOCK



As part of every game preview this season in Bear Report, we will take a look back at a memorable game played between the Bears and their upcoming opponent.

Payton fought off flu to make history in win over Minnesota

By Don Pierson
Bear Report Columnist

The best seasons, best games, best runs all blur. Walter Payton's greatness was measured not in particular moments but in the panorama of an unparalleled career.

When viewing the Grand Canyon, you don't point to one rock. Yet by the numbers, Payton's 1977 season was his best, when he gained 1,852 yards and averaged 5.5 yards a carry. On Nov. 20 of that year, he ran through the Minnesota Vikings for 275 yards, still the NFL single-game record.

Only seven years earlier, in 1970, Ross Montgomery led all Bear rushers for the entire season with 229 yards.

Payton never seemed to hold that day in special esteem.

"I had the flu," he recalled 20 years later. "I was throwing up. I didn't care about 275 yards; I just wanted to get that game over with."

Payton broke O.J. Simpson's 1976 record of 273 yards on his 40th carry.

"We didn't have anything else," Payton said. "Forty darn times. It was a rough day."

Despite Payton's dominance, the Bears managed to eke out a 10-7 win, which baffled offensive coordinator Sid Gillman, embarrassed by the conservatism demanded by head coach Jack Pardee.

The record came by accident as Pardee was trying to preserve the victory. Payton had 271 yards and the Bears were at the Minnesota 6-yard line, fourth and goal as time was winding down.

Quarterback Bob Avellini ran off the field because he expected a field goal try.

BEARS 10, Minnesota 7
Nov. 20, 1977
Soldier Field, Chicago

"No, run a sweep," Pardee ordered.

"Jack, it's fourth down," Avellini replied.

Payton gained four yards. The Bears lost the ball on downs, but Payton set the record.

"I don't think Jack even had the record in mind," Avellini said.

What Pardee had in mind was winning. The Vikings had scored their only touchdown on a blocked punt.

Payton and his teammates thought he enjoyed a better day three weeks earlier in Green Bay when he had 117 yards in the first quarter and 162 by halftime. He finished with 205 after leaving with 11 minutes to play.

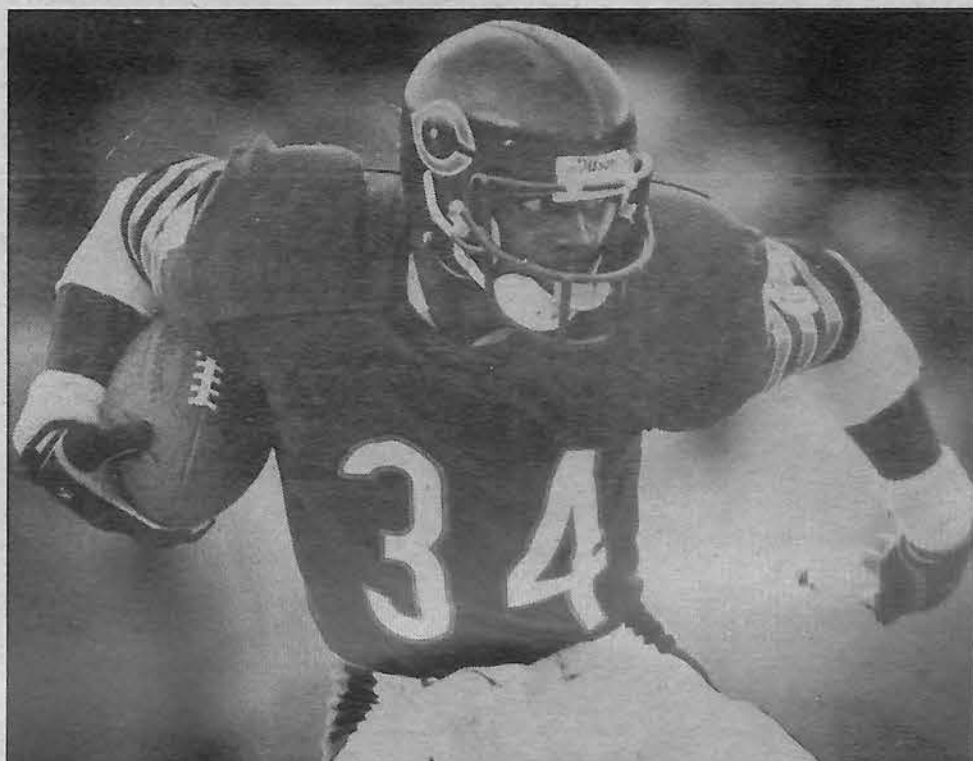
Payton was exhausted in the Minnesota game.

"He was so tired, pretty quiet, didn't say a whole lot," tackle Ted Albrecht said. "I kept saying, 'Historical day. This will be for all time.'"

Payton did not believe the record would endure because he accused today's defensive players of shoddy tackling.

"People try to knock people down," Payton said. "People are too agile for that kind of stuff. Instead of hitting and wrapping up and grabbing, people are just throwing their shoulder pads with their heads down, trying to knock people down. Nobody tackles anymore."

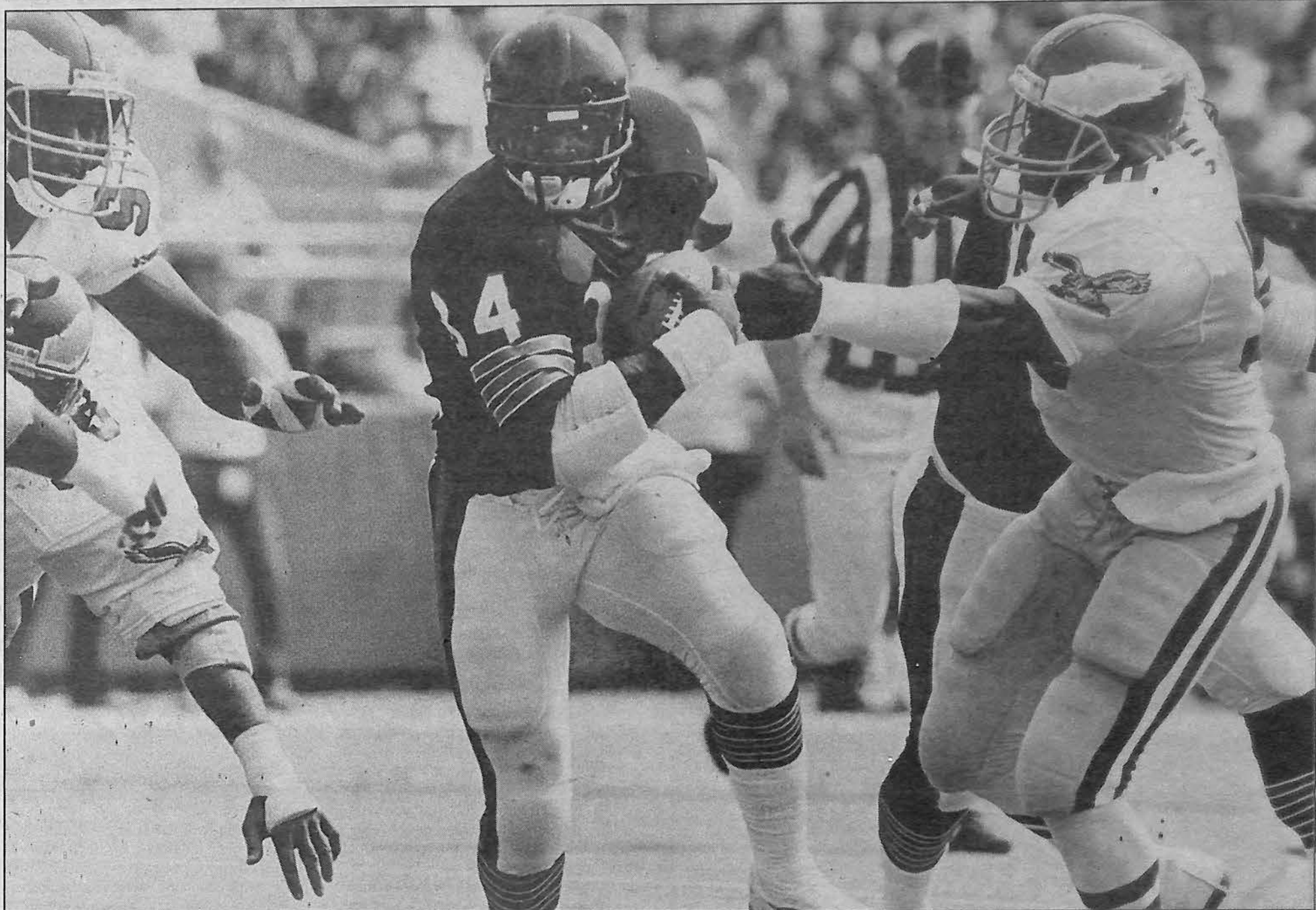
"If I had guys doing that against me, I'd have had 18,000 yards."



Walter Payton called it "just another game" after he rushed for 275 yards in a 1977 win, but it was anything but as he set an NFL record that still stands.

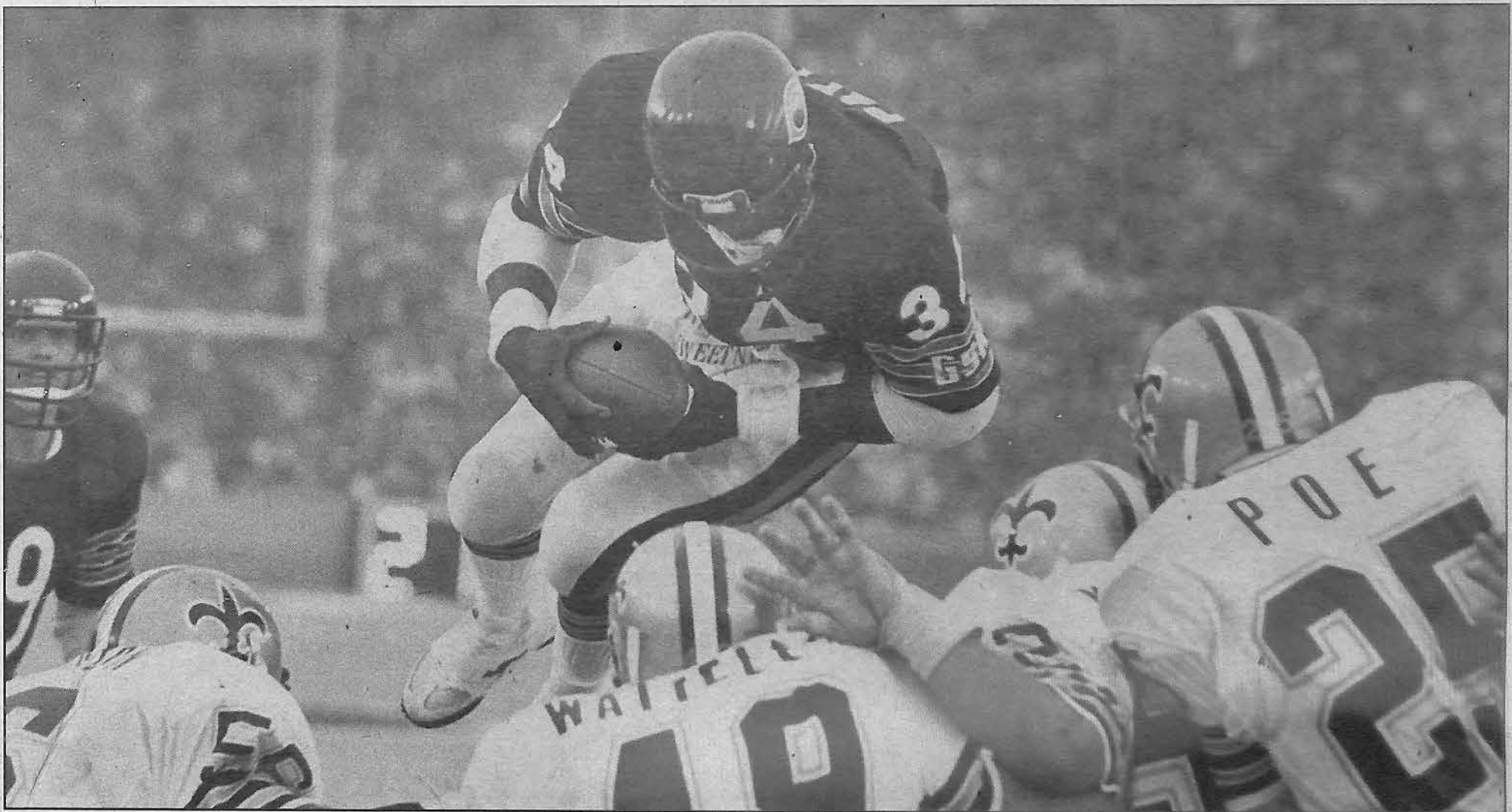
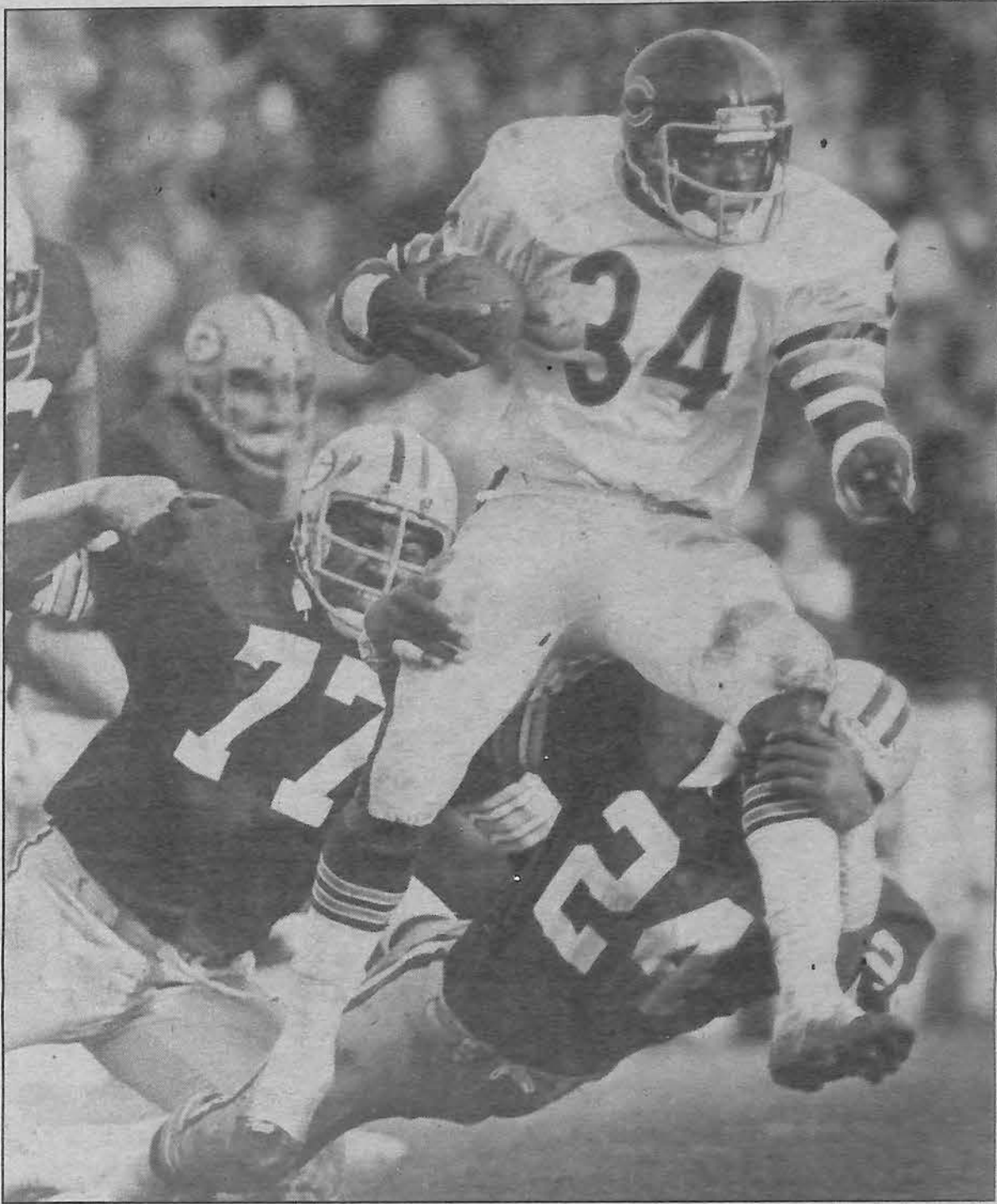


REMEMBERING SWEETNESS





REMEMBERING SWEETNESS



Payton gives Robinson, Bears a boost

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

GREEN BAY, Wis.--Blocking a field goal was probably the only feat the legendary Walter Payton didn't accomplish during his illustrious 13-year career with the Chicago Bears.

But Bryan Robinson was willing to give "Sweetness" the credit after swatting away Ryan Longwell's 28-yard field goal attempt on the final play of Sunday's game at Green Bay to preserve a thrilling 14-13 Bears victory.

Inspired by Payton's memory and wearing a patch commemorating his life and legacy on their jerseys, the Bears ended a 10-game losing streak against their most bitter rival in dramatic fashion.

"I think Walter Payton actually picked me up a little bit and boosted me up in the air because I can't jump that high," said a jubilant Robinson. "I don't know what happened. Maybe I had a running start and he boosted me up and I got a hand up there."

"Walter had a lot to do with it. I know he did. God bless him and his family."

Robinson's block capped a highly emotional week during which Bears players past and present joined Payton's family, friends and fans in paying homage to the NFL's all-time leading rusher who died Nov. 1 of bile duct cancer.

"It was a honor for all of us to wear the patch and we've got to believe he had a hand in the final play," said head coach Dick Jauron.

"It was an inspirational week for us in so many ways."

The victory was the first for the Bears (4-5) over Green Bay since a 30-17 decision on Dec. 5, 1993 at Soldier Field. It also allowed Chicago to end a three-game skid and match its win total from each of the previous two seasons with seven



games remaining.

"They're hard to win in the National Football League, so whenever you win it's a great feeling," Jauron said. "But having lost 10 in a row, I think this is a little bit special, particularly for the older guys and particularly this week."

"I've never beaten them up here and it's been seven years," said tight end Ryan Wetnight, who returned to the game after being knocked unconscious by a devastating but clean hit. "It's been since my rookie year since we beat the Pack. It's a big win for us."

The Bears pulled off the upset with their third-string quarterback. Jim Miller replaced starter Cade McNown midway through the first quarter after the rookie suffered a sprained right knee. The Bears also played without starting receiver Curtis Conway, who missed his fourth straight game with a high ankle sprain.

Miller threw three second quarter interceptions and a fourth that was nullified by a penalty. But in the second half he rebounded to complete 13 of 18 passes for 120 yards including a 6-yard TD to Bobby Engram to put the Bears ahead 14-10 with :29 left in the third quarter.

"I was happy with the way I came out in the second half and rebounded," said Miller, who likely will start Sunday's game against Minnesota if McNown and injured No. 1 quarterback Shane



Photo by Al Fredrickson

Bears safety Chris Hudson ends a Packers threat by intercepting a Brett Favre pass in the end zone during the Bears' 14-13 win at Green Bay.

Matthews are unable to play. "I can't say enough about the offensive line. They did a great job. We ran the ball well. In the third quarter, we really started to do some things."

Perhaps in tribute to Payton, the Bears rushed for a season-high 160 yards against the league's 26th-ranked run defense. Chicago did it by committee; during one four-play span in the second quarter, Curtis Enis, Glyn Milburn and James Allen all had 11-yard runs.

Enis was particularly impressive, seemingly running harder than he had all season and fighting for every extra inch. Enis rushed for a game-high 88 yards on 20 carries, a healthy 4.4-yard average. Milburn flashed his quickness on a 49-yard TD run that gave the Bears a 7-3 second quarter lead. And Allen added 17 yards on four carries.

"The run game was outstanding," Jauron said. "We've talked about it a lot. Our offensive line obviously has to do a good job for us to do that. But it's not just them. It's our receivers and our backs blocking, and we take great pride in that."

Jauron also took pride in a defensive effort that allowed Bear killer Brett Favre and the potent Packers offense to make only one trip into the end zone. The Bears limited Green Bay to 85 yards on 29 rushes (2.9 average) and permitted just one TD on the Packers' five trips into the red zone.

Things looked bleak early in the game when McNown was injured on the first play of the Bears' second possession. He remained in the contest for two more snaps but left when the Bears were forced to punt. On his last play, McNown scrambled to recover an errant shotgun snap from center Olin Kreutz, losing 17 yards.

Longwell's 37-yard field goal gave the Packers a 3-0 lead with 4:46 left in the first quarter.

After Milburn's first rushing TD since 1994 put the Bears ahead, Green Bay

PLAY OF THE GAME

No debate here:
Bryan Robinson
blocked Ryan
Longwell's 28-yard
field goal attempt to
preserve the victory.



reclaimed a 10-7 lead as Favre converted a Miller interception into a 7-yard TD pass to tight end Tyrone Davis with :30 left in the half.

Late in the third quarter, Marcus Robinson's 33-yard reception led to Engram's first TD of the season.

Longwell's 26-yard field goal drew the Packers within 14-13 early in the final period.

The Bears failed to extend their lead when Chris Boniol hooked a 34-yard field goal attempt wide left with 5:56 remaining in the game.

That set the stage for Green Bay's final drive. Favre completed six of eight passes for 49 yards and benefited from two short pass interference penalties against Tom Carter and Terry Cousin.

Longwell set up for the kick with :07 left. Robinson then took center stage and, with an assist from Payton, made what will likely be considered one of the most memorable plays in the storied history of the league's founding franchise.

"This is great for us," Robinson said. "this is great for the city of Chicago, and it's for you, Walter, it's for you, buddy."

"It doesn't get any better than this," added defensive tackle Jim Flanigan, a Green Bay native who had never won in 10 games against the Packers. "It came down to the final seconds, and it was beautiful. It was a heck of a game."

"We dedicated this one to Walter and the rest of the season, and hopefully he's smiling down from above."

Bears 1999 Schedule

PRESEASON			
Date	Opponent	Bears	Opponent
Sat., Aug. 7	INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	9	6
Fri., Aug. 13	at Pittsburgh Steelers	23	30
Sat., Aug. 21	ST. LOUIS RAMS	38	24
Sat., Aug. 28	at Cleveland Browns	24	35
REGULAR SEASON			
Sun., Sept. 12	KANSAS CITY CHIEFS	20	17
Sun., Sept. 19	SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	13	14
Sun., Sept. 26	at Oakland Raiders	17	24
Sun., Oct. 3	NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	14	10
Sun., Oct. 10	at Minnesota Vikings	24	22
Sun., Oct. 17	PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	16	20
Sun., Oct. 24	at Tampa Bay Buccaneers	3	6
Sun., Oct. 31	at Washington Redskins	22	48
Sun., Nov. 7	at Green Bay Packers	14	13
Sun., Nov. 14	MINNESOTA VIKINGS	Noon	FOX
Sun., Nov. 21	at San Diego Chargers	3:15 p.m.	FOX
Thurs., Nov. 25	at Detroit Lions	11:40 a.m.	FOX
Sun., Dec. 5	GREEN BAY PACKERS	Noon	FOX
Sun., Dec. 12	Bye		
Sun., Dec. 19	DETROIT LIONS	Noon	FOX
Sun., Dec. 26	at St. Louis Rams	Noon	FOX
Sun., Jan. 2	TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	Noon	FOX

*Central time

INSIDE THE BEARS

Persistence pays off in blocked kick

The Bears hadn't blocked a field goal this season until Bryan Robinson saved Sunday's win at Green Bay on the final play, but they had been coming close.

Robinson fought off a block, leaped and extended his right arm to prevent Ryan Longwell from beating the Bears with a 28-yard field goal.

"We just had our regular block on," said Bears coach Dick Jauron. "To be perfectly honest, I thought we were really close on the other one (Longwell's 26-yarder earlier in the fourth quarter) and I thought we could get a kick."

"It was not anything special. It was just a special moment."

So special that it doesn't compare to any other play in Robinson's three NFL seasons, the last two with the Bears.

"This is the best moment by far," said Robinson, acquired off waivers from the St. Louis Rams in 1998. "To be a Chicago Bear and to hear about this rivalry ... we're just exuberant right now."

Quarterback Brett Favre directed a 73-yard drive to put the Packers in position to win the game. After Green Bay was in range, the Bears wanted to keep the Packers out of the end zone.

"We felt like no matter what happened it's got to come down to a field goal," Robinson said. "We can't let them score (a touchdown). And if it comes down to a field goal, it can go either way."

The last time the Bears blocked a field goal was Dec. 20, 1998 when James "Big Cat" Williams blocked a 45-yard attempt by Baltimore's Matt Stover.

As the Bears left the field in celebration, few players knew that it was Robinson that blocked the kick. Mike Wells thought it was Shane Burton, while others didn't seem to care.

"I don't know who blocked it," shouted defensive tackle Jim Flanigan, "but I'm glad they did."

--Larry Mayer

Enis shares the load

Milburn, Allen contribute to top running effort of '99

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

GREEN BAY, Wis.—Curtis Enis entered Sunday's game at Green Bay with the most carries in the NFC, but he seemed to be more effective while sharing the workload with two of his teammates.

Enis, who gained a game-high 88 yards on 20 carries, was complemented by Glyn Milburn (3 carries for 54 yards) and James Allen (4-17) in Chicago's thrilling 14-13 win.



Robinson

"It's something we've talked about all year, even in training camp," said Bears coach Dick Jauron. "We wanted to give Curtis a break and offset him with both James and Glyn, and we got a chance to do that."

Milburn's 49-yard TD on a third-and-10 out of the shotgun gave the Bears a 7-3 second quarter lead.

"I'm excited," Milburn said. "That particular play was just a simple draw. I'm sure they were expecting a pass play and I was probably hidden behind (6-4, 312-pound tackle) Blake Brockermeyer when he was leading up field."

It was the longest run of Milburn's career and just his second ever rushing TD and first since an 11-yarder on Dec. 17, 1994 at San Francisco when he played for the Denver Broncos. It was also the Bears' longest run of the season.

In all, the Bears rushed for a season-high 160 yards on 29 attempts, a 5.5-yard average.

"We ran the ball extremely well, which was a huge thing for us," Jauron said. "We felt like we had to be in the game."

End of drought: Sunday's victory was particularly rewarding for veteran players who suffered through many of Green Bay's 10 straight wins over the Bears, the longest streak in the 158-game series that dates to 1921.

"This game meant a lot to us, having lost 10 in a row and trying to fight our way into the winner's circle," said Jauron, who spent nine seasons as a Packers defensive assistant.



GAME NOTES

"I give a lot of credit to the whole coaching staff and the players. I thought they played their hearts out."

About the only other time the Bears won such a dramatic game over the Packers was in 1987 when Kevin Butler kicked a 52-yard field goal on the game's final play in a 26-24 win. This time, it was a blocked field goal attempt by Bryan Robinson on the last snap that preserved the win.

"You can't imagine how much this means to this football team and this group of young men, and I know to our fans too and to all of us," Jauron said. "We worked awfully hard in that game, and to have it come down to that and then to block the thing was a great way to end the game for us."

For Walter: Several Bears players admitted they were inspired by Walter Payton's memory in the team's first game since the legendary running back's death.

"Watching the old clips of Walter you saw many times how hard he went against Green Bay," said receiver Bobby Engram, who scored his first TD of the season in the third quarter on a 6-yard reception from Jim Miller.

"I don't want to say we came out and dedicated the game to him, but we felt his presence."

The Bears will wear a patch with the No. 34 on their jerseys for the rest of the

season.

"It definitely inspired us," said tight end Ryan Wetnight. "When we got into the locker room this morning and '34' was on our jersey, we really were inspired. We just wanted to go out there and play as hard as we could. That's all you can really do. No one could accomplish what Walter accomplished, but we could play as hard as he played."

"I think it's important for everyone to keep Walter in their heart," added tackle James "Big Cat" Williams. "Like his brother (Eddie) said the other day, you can't go out there and try to be like Payton. We can just play to the best of our ability and keep him and his family right there in our heart."

Iron man: Packers quarterback Brett Favre set an NFL record for quarterbacks by making his 117th consecutive start. He was briefly shaken up, however, when Robinson drilled him out of bounds into the band that performed at halftime. Robinson drew a 15-yard roughness penalty on the play.

"I thought it was going to be the last day of the streak when I went into the Wisconsin Badger band," Favre said.

Favre completed 27 of 41 passes for 267 yards with 1 TD and 1 interception for the Packers, who have now lost two straight at Lambeau Field for the first time since 1990.

"I'm still sort of numb right now," said Favre, who directed a late 73-yard drive to set up the potential game-winning field goal. "We haven't lost two around here in a long time. We'd like to score more points. I was thinking about coming down here and saying, 'It was another great come from behind win.' It just wasn't our day, I guess."

1999 NFL STANDINGS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	5	3	0	.625	138	138
Washington	5	3	0	.625	259	222
Dallas	4	3	0	.571	182	129
Arizona	2	6	0	.250	92	168
Philadelphia	2	7	0	.222	114	184

Central Division

Detroit	6	2	0	.750	182	148
Packers	4	4	0	.500	153	165
Minnesota	4	4	0	.500	183	158
Tampa Bay	4	4	0	.500	122	118
BEARS	4	5	0	.444	143	174

Western Division

St. Louis	6	2	0	.750	265	118
Carolina	3	5	0	.375	186	169
San Francisco	3	5	0	.375	150	234
Atlanta	2	7	0	.222	117	216
New Orleans	1	7	0	.125	123	179

Bye: New England,
N.Y. Giants, Oakland

Sunday, Nov. 7

BEARS 14, Green Bay 13
N.Y. Jets 12, Arizona 7
Baltimore 41, Cleveland 9
Buffalo 34, Washington 17
Jacksonville 30, Atlanta 7
Indianapolis 25, Kansas City 17
Carolina 33, Philadelphia 7
Detroit 31, St. Louis 27
Seattle 37, Cincinnati 20
Denver 33, San Diego 17
Pittsburgh 27, San Francisco 6
Tampa Bay 31, New Orleans 16
Miami 17, Tennessee 0

Monday, Nov. 8

Dallas at Minnesota, 8 p.m.

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Miami	7	1	0	.875	189	143
Indianapolis	6	2	0	.750	223	162
New England	6	2	0	.750	191	150
Buffalo	6	3	0	.666	184	146
N.Y. Jets	2	6	0	.250	126	150

Central Division

Jacksonville	7	1	0	.875	210	76
Tennessee	6	2	0	.750	166	157
Pittsburgh	5	3	0	.625	157	108
Baltimore	3	5	0	.375	136	144
Cincinnati	1	8	0	.111	116	278
Cleveland	1	8	0	.111	83	238

Western Division

Seattle	6	2	0	.750	185	128
Kansas City	5	3	0	.625	190	119
Oakland	4	4	0	.500	157	153
San Diego	4	4	0	.500	127	166
Denver	3	6	0	.333	177	185

Bye: Atlanta

Sunday, Nov. 14

Minnesota at BEARS, Noon
Carolina at St. Louis, Noon
Cleveland at Pittsburgh, Noon
Indianapolis at N.Y. Giants, Noon
Kansas City at Tampa Bay, Noon
Miami at Buffalo, Noon
San Francisco at New Orleans, Noon
Tennessee at Cincinnati, Noon
Washington at Philadelphia, Noon
Baltimore at Jacksonville, 3:05 p.m.
Detroit at Arizona, 3:15 p.m.
Green Bay at Dallas, 3:15 p.m.
San Diego at Oakland, 3:05 p.m.
Denver at Seattle, 7:20 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 15

N.Y. Jets at New England, 8 p.m.

Week 9 Results

Week 10 Schedule

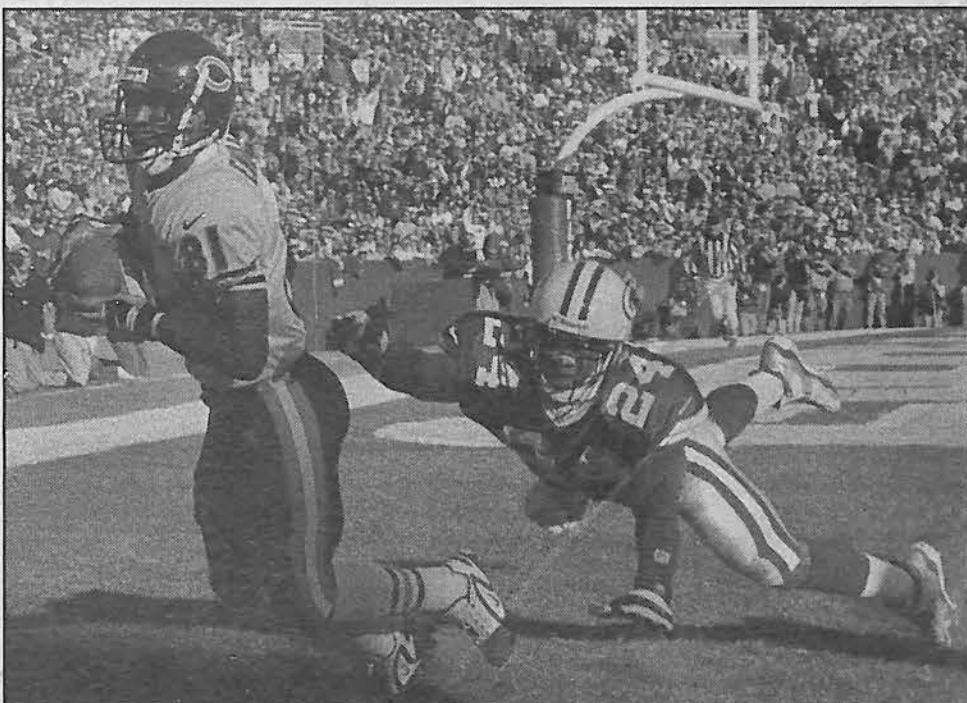


Photo by Dave Fredrickson

Bobby Engram beats Packers rookie cornerback Antuan Edwards for the game-winning TD in the third quarter of Sunday's 14-13 win at Green Bay.

Miller rebounds in second half

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

GREEN BAY, Wis.—With rookie wide receiver **Marty Booker** the only other option at quarterback, **Jim Miller** knew he wouldn't get benched no matter how poorly he played.

But that didn't make Miller feel any better about a first half performance in which he threw three interceptions and had a fourth nullified by penalty.

"Obviously I didn't feel too good in the first half," said Miller, who entered the game midway through the first quarter after rookie **Cade McNown** was forced to exit with a sprained right knee after being hit by **Gilbert Brown**.

"It took me a while to get into the flow of the game. I think everybody knows I don't get a lot of reps. (But) whether that has something to do with it or not, I'm paid to be ready to play."

Miller rebounded in the second half to complete 13 of 18 passes for 120 yards including a 6-yard TD to **Bobby Engram**. If McNown and No. 1 quarterback **Shane Matthews** (hamstring) are unable to play Sunday against Minnesota, Miller will make his second NFL start.

Last resort: With Matthews and wide receiver **Curtis Conway** both sidelined with injuries, Booker was listed as the emergency third-quarterback. Booker last played the position in 1995 at Northeast Louisiana. Conway also played quarterback in college at USC.

And if Miller had been forced out of

the game with an injury?

"I've still got a couple of skills at the quarterback position from playing in college and I would've given it my all and done what I had to do," Booker said.

Off target: Bears place-kicker **Chris Boniol** hooked a 34-yard attempt wide left with 5:56 left that could have extended Chicago's lead to 17-13 and forced the Packers to score a touchdown to win. Boniol is now 4 of 7 in four games with the Bears.

"It's certainly disappointing," said Bears coach **Dick Jauron**. "I don't know what to say about it other than I'm glad it didn't come back to haunt us in the end."

Tough news: Bears receiver **Macey Brooks** was carted off the field with after suffering what was later reported as a season-ending torn ACL.

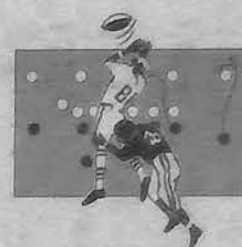
Operation push: On the Bears' first position of the third quarter, **Curtis Enis** gained five yards on fourth-and-one. With the pile not moving, Enis kept his legs churning and teammate **James "Big Cat" Williams** provided a push that moved several players from both teams well past the first down marker.

"I told him, if we get into this pile, I'm going to keep pumping," Enis said. "I told him to hit like a defensive player and let's move the ball. I'll deal with that on Monday when I wake up sore."

Before the game the Bears announced that Williams had signed a four-year, \$14 million contract extension.



GAME STATISTICS



	1	2	3	4	F
BEARS	7	0	7	0	14
Packers	3	7	0	3	13

TEAM STATISTICS

	Bears	Packers
Total First Downs	19	21
By Rushing	9	2
By Passing	9	16
By Penalty	1	3
Third Down Efficiency	6-14-43%	8-17-47%
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-2-50%	0-1-0%
Total Net Yards	311	344
Total Offensive Plays (inc. times thrown passing)	64	72
Average gain per offensive play	4.9	4.8
Net Yards Rushing	160	85
Total Rushing Plays	29	29
Average gain per rushing play	5.5	2.9
Tackles for a loss, number and yards	6-15	4-12
Net Yards Passing	151	259
Times thrown, yards lost attempting to pass	1-6	2-8
Gross yards passing	157	267
Pass Attempts-Completions-Had Intercepted	34-18-3	41-27-1
Average gain per pass play (inc. # thrown passing)	4.3	6.0
Kickoffs Number-In End Zone-Touchbacks	3-0-0	4-0-0
Punts Number and Average	4-38.8	5-39.6
Had Blocked	0	0
FGs - PATs Had Blocked	0-0	1-0
Net punting average	37.3	34.4
Total Return Yardage (Not Including Kickoffs)	26	15
No. and Yards Punt Returns	2-26	1-6
No. and Yards Kickoff Returns	4-58	3-33
No. and Yards Interception Returns	1-0	3-9
Penalties Number and Yards	3-24	4-30
Fumbles Number and Lost	3-1	1-0
Touchdowns	2	1
Rushing	1	0
Passing	1	1
Extra Points Made-Attempts	2-2	1-1
Kicking Made-Attempts	2-2	1-1
Field Goals Made-Attempts	0-1	2-3
Final Score	14	13
Time of Possession	29:28	30:32

0 INT, 0 TD. **Green Bay:** Brett Favre 27-41 for 267 yards, 1 INT, 1 TD.

Receiving

Chicago: Bobby Engram 6-48, Marcus Robinson 4-66, Glyn Milburn 2-1, Macey Brooks 1-10, Curtis Enis 1-8, D'Wayne Bates 1-8, John Allred 1-6, Edgar Bennett 1-5, Ryan Wetnight 1-5. **Green Bay:** Antonio Freeman 8-71, Bill Schroeder 4-57, Dorsey Levens 4-25, Corey Bradford 3-53, William Henderson 3-25, Tyrone Davis 3-24, Jeff Thomason 2-12.

Tackles-assists-sacks (unofficial)

Chicago: Barry Minter 10-4-0, Walt Harris 11-0-1, Mike Wells 6-1-0, Tony Parrish 5-1-0, Ricardo McDonald 4-1-0, Chris Hudson 4-1-0, Sean Harris 3-1-0, Terry Cousin 2-2-0, Jim Flanagan 3-0-1, Van Tuinei 2-0-0, Tom Carter 2-0-0, Bryan Robinson 1-1-0, Shane Burton 1-0-0, Warrick Holdman 1-0-0. **Green Bay:** Darren Sharper 10-1-0, Bernardo Harris 5-3-0, Tyrone Williams 4-2-0, June Waddy 3-2-0, Santana Dotson 2-3-0, George Koonce 3-1-0, Fred Vinson 2-2-0, Vaughn Booker 2-2-0, Leroy Butler 2-1-0, Mike McKenzie 2-1-0, Anthony Davis 2-1-0, Vonnie Holliday 1-2-0, Gilbert Brown 0-2-0, Keith McKenzie 1-0-0, Antonio Dingle 0-1-0, Billy Lyon 0-1-1.

Interceptions

Chicago (Chris Hudson 1 for 0 yards); **Green Bay** (Mike McKenzie 1 for 0 yards, Antwan Edwards 1 for 0 yards, Darren Sharper 1 for 9 yards).

Fumbles lost

Chicago (Curtis Enis).

Opponent's fumbles recovered

Green Bay (Keith McKenzie).

Officials

Referee-Mike Carey, Umpire-Garth Defeiece, Head linesman-Sid Semon, Line judge-Walt Anderson, Field judge-Pete Morelli, Side judge-Tommy Moore, Back judge-Ron Spittler.
A: 59,867; T: 3:06.

Missed field goals

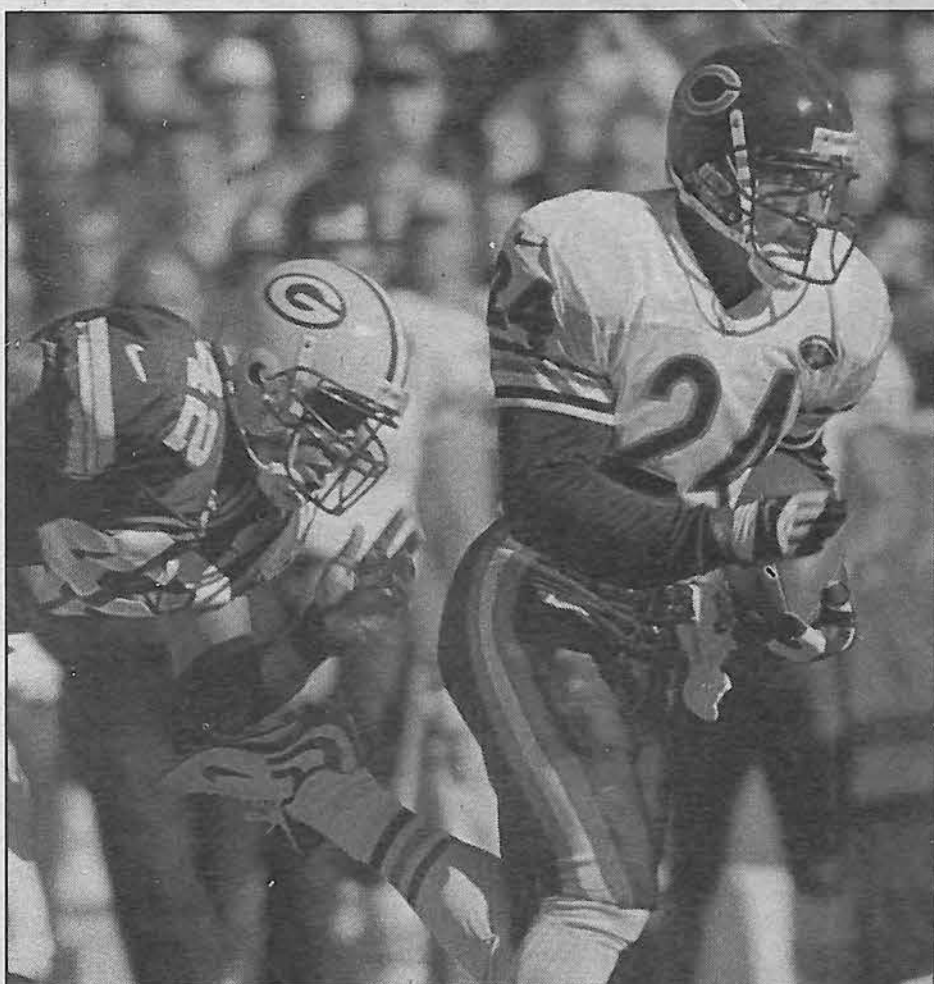
Chicago (Chris Boniol 34); **Green Bay** (Ryan Longwell 28).

Rushing

Chicago: Curtis Enis 20-88, Glyn Milburn 3-54, James Allen 4-17, Edgar Bennett 1-1, Cade McNown 1-0. **Green Bay:** Dorsey Levens 26-79, Brett Favre 2-8, Antonio Freeman 1-minus 2.

Passing

Chicago: Jim Miller 16-29 for 142 yards, 3 INT, 1 TD, Cade McNown 2-5 for 15 yards,

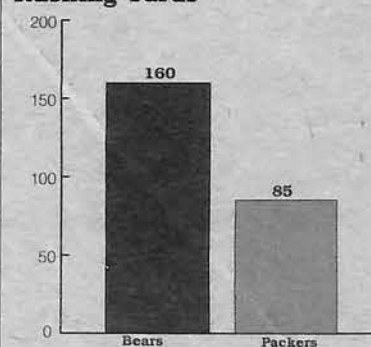


Can't catch me

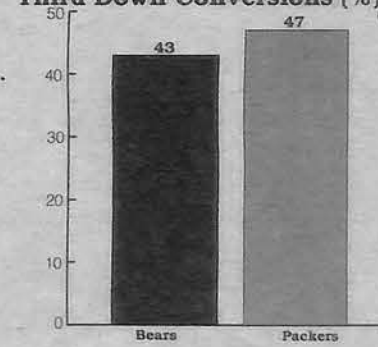
Glyn Milburn separates from Packers safety Darren Sharper for a 49-yard TD run that gave the Bears a 7-3 second quarter lead at Lambeau Field.

Photo by Dave Fredrickson

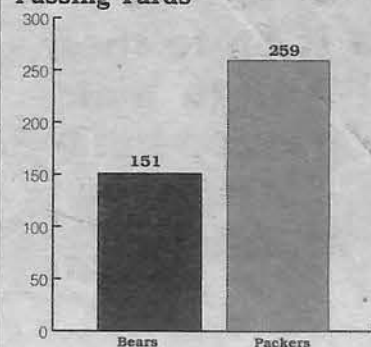
Rushing Yards



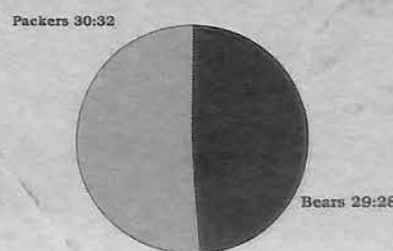
Third Down Conversions (%)



Passing Yards



Time of Possession



Inspirational speakers offer stirring tributes at funeral

By Don Pierson
Bear Report Columnist

Jarrett Payton called his father his hero. Eddie Payton thanked everybody on behalf of his brother.

John Madden called him the greatest football player ever.

Mike Singletary talked about his last great run.

Mike Ditka said he loved him.

In a stirring yet subdued religious service, Walter Payton's family, teammates, coaches and friends paid their final tributes last Friday in a private two-hour service at Life Changers International Church in Barrington.

Elder A.H. Montgomery preached for a half hour and pastor Gregory Dickow gave evangelical opening and closing remarks and prayers.

Among the 1,000 mourners were an unprecedented gathering of 88 former Bears' teammates, including most of the 1985 Super Bowl champions. NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue and Illinois Governor George Ryan stood in line while Payton's wife Connie, son Jarrett, daughter Brittney, mother Alyne and other members of the family greeted people for two hours inside the sanctuary. Mayor Daley also paid his respects.

Fellow Bears' Hall of Fame running back Gale Sayers sat quietly in the rear of the church for two hours before joining team owners Ed and Virginia McCaskey and family and other dignitaries in front.

Said Singletary: "Walter would say: 'Let's not wait for an occasion like this. Call somebody. Be there for somebody. Pray for somebody. Uplift somebody.'"

The Hall of Fame linebacker carried the theme of celebration and Christian resurrection as only Singletary can.

"As he looks down, I think he's saying to whoever is crying, 'Hold everything. Don't you understand what just took place? I am here on Holy ground. And I'm running hills I never thought I could run, I'm running on clouds and stars and I'm on the moon.'"

Singletary recalled Payton as a great fourth-quarter player who re-evaluated his priorities and was "at his finest" in the hours before his death.

"To all of his teammates, you would be proud," Singletary said. "Fourth down and no timeouts and he looked up at the line of

scrimmage and he didn't have any blocking. They were there to take him out—hate, fear, unforgiveness, selfishness...Walter was asking the question, 'How do I get past this?' As he looked up, Christ was there saying, 'Walter, touch my hand. Grace is yours today.'

"And Walter took his hand and he didn't have to run and he didn't have to jump and he didn't have to earn it. It was free."

Ditka followed Singletary and hugged him.

"Walter liked order and the first thing he would say is, 'Whoever put these speakers in order screwed up.' I should not be last," Ditka said.

Then Ditka rose to the occasion as only Ditka can. His voice shaking like most of the speakers, Ditka called Payton "the best runner, blocker, teammate and friend I've ever seen. Truly the best football player I've ever seen. Coach Halas is saying, 'Hey, I've finally got the greatest Bear of all.'"

Ditka said Payton's humility is a great lesson for all young athletes to know, see, and emulate.

"The game is greater than all the athletes in the game and always will be and Walter knew that," Ditka said. "How he did play that game."

Ditka said Payton's "real legacy" will be the mark he left on his family.

"The lessons, the values, the principles, the ideals he lived for and he taught...They will pass it on to their children and their children to their children. That's what he'll leave behind. That's a heck of a lot better than scoring touchdowns, gang."

Ditka cited the Bible's two great commandments—to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself.

"I know Walter loved God because I watched him deal with people and to love God is to love your fellow man and he did that exceptionally well," Ditka said.

Former Bears' head coaches Jim Dooley and Jack Pardee were present. Among Payton's fellow Hall of Fame players in attendance were Ted Hendricks, Mel Blount, and Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association. Former linebackers Otis Wilson and Wilber Marshall, receivers Willie Gault and Dennis McKinnon, running backs Neal Anderson, Dennis Gentry, and

Calvin Thomas sat somberly for two hours before the service.

Matt Suhey, Roland Harper, and other teammates quietly greeted a group of players and coaches in a section of the sanctuary. Leslie Frazier, now a coach with the Philadelphia Eagles, and Dan Neal, now coaching with Ditka in New Orleans, left their teams to come. Receiver Ken Margerum, head coach at Northern California, took a red-eye flight. Ditka hugged quarterback Jim McMahon and others as people filed out.

Jarrett recalled his father asking him to be his presenter at Hall of Fame ceremonies in 1993.

"Little did I know six years later, I would be standing here in front of you in these circumstances," he said. "Although this is time of loss and sorrow, my mom, sister and I also want everybody to see this is a celebration of my father's life."

Among the lessons his dad taught him, Jarrett said, was a "responsibility as children of God to share our good fortune with others."

Madden offered to end all arguments about who was the greatest.

"Walter Payton was the greatest," said the Fox TV commentator. "If you wanted yards, you'd want Walter Payton. Who do

you want to block? Walter Payton. If you wanted someone to catch, Walter Payton. He played on some bad teams. How about if you want somebody to make a tackle after an interception? One year he had 18."

Older brother Eddie said he was certain Walter would want to thank his family for being so positive and encouraging to the end, Matt Suhey and his teammates, the state of Mississippi and Jackson State, the Bears and the Halas family and the man who drafted him, the late Jim Finks, although "I'm sure by now he's already told him."

Eddie, former kick returner for four NFL teams, provided the biggest laugh of the day by donning Walter's sunglasses and recounting a story of a Mississippi gas station attendant mistaking Eddie for Walter and giving him a free tank.

In a high-pitched voice, Eddie said he told him: "If you're ever in Chicago, look me up."

Eddie concluded by reciting what motivated his brother to excel:

"Each new day, the good Lord gives me the opportunity to be good, better, or best. Each day I said to the Lord, I will not rest until my good is better and my better is best."



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The lessons, the values, the principles,
the ideals he lived for and he
taught...They will pass it on to their
children and their children to their
children. That's what he'll leave behind.
That's a heck of a lot better than
scoring touchdowns, gang.

Mike Ditka

”

Emotional Payton surprised himself

Sweetness shared feelings at Hall induction

The following story was adapted from Don Pierson's article in the Aug. 7, 1993 Bear Report chronicling Walter Payton's induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

CANTON, Ohio—By 8 a.m. prior to pro football's Hall of Fame festivities, Walter Payton was beginning to get the idea. He was in a parade in front of 200,000 people and on the hillside near the Hall, fans were chanting "Walter, Walter, Walter."

They had stayed all night to get a good view and it was still three hours before the induction ceremony. Payton had come to Canton late and without a whole lot of enthusiasm. He had blamed the media for ruining his election by overplaying it. He said the foregone conclusion of this day was like telling a kid what he got for Christmas and then expecting him to act surprised.

But Payton surprised himself.

Instead of running away from his feelings, the NFL's all-time leading rusher smacked head on into the middle of a whole lineup of memories. After bouncing off several potential stumbling blocks, he scored, as usual, drawing huge cheers from a crowd gathered at the steps of the

Hall including Virginia McCaskey, owner of the Bears.

Payton followed Dan Fouts, Larry Little and Chuck Noll, and preceded Bill Walsh. None of them drew as warm a response as Jarrett Payton, then 12, Walter's son and presenter who brought the fans to their feet just by appearing at the podium as the youngest presenter ever. He immediately and frantically waved them down, pleading: "I'm trying to get this thing over with."

In a two-minute speech, briefest and most welcome of the day, Jarrett emphasized the father he knows rather than the player he hardly remembers.

"My dad played 13 years, only missing one game, and breaking all running back records," Jarrett said. "Not only is my dad an exceptional athlete, he's a role model. He's my biggest role model and my best friend. We do a lot of things together—playing basketball, golf, going to movies to name a few. I'm sure my sister will endorse this statement: we have a super dad."

Payton, wearing sunglasses to hide more than protect his eyes from the brilliant sunshine, acknowledged the chants. He had made friendly wagers that he would not cry, including one for the right



The 1993 Pro Football Hall of Fame class included (from left) Dan Fouts, Larry Little, Chuck Noll, Walter Payton and Bill Walsh.

to wear the Super Bowl rings of Little and NFL Players Association executive director Gene Upshaw for a year.

Payton had been confronted by Hall of Famer Ray Nitschke and criticized by fellow Bears legend Gale Sayers for displaying a blasé attitude in the months leading up to his induction.

"I was the first one to say how strong I was," Payton said. "As it goes to show, when you're amongst your peers such as these great athletes, you try to be something you're not. After hearing my son get up here and talk, I don't care if I lose the bet."

Payton's voice cracked. He didn't break down, but neither did anybody else.

Payton paid tribute to his high school and college coaches, and to all teammates. He thanked older brother Eddie and sister Pamela for chasing him around his Columbia, Miss., house with a broom and dish rag. "That's the reason I had the moves I did," he said.

He honored his mother, Alyne, "who instilled what you see here today—some of it good, and everything bad I earned it on my own."

Payton paid tribute to former Bears general manager Jim Finks, who was fighting what would be a losing battle with lung cancer at the time.

Saving his most heartfelt thoughts for last, Payton turned to Jarrett, daughter Brittney, then 8, and wife Connie. He had said that getting to the Hall of Fame "doesn't belong to me alone but to everyone I played with and every coach." But the family brought it all home to an intensely personal level that few inductees can escape.

"The thing I'm most proud of and the thing I'm most ashamed of, they coincide with each other," Payton said. "You saw my son up here and believe me, I had a

lump in my throat so big, it was unbelievable. I also have a little daughter and I think about her also.

"Their mom was with me those 13 years and believe me, they were not good because I was not the easiest person to get along with. Because of my wanting to give so much to other people, you tend to neglect the people you truly love the most.

"I want to stand up and say at this point in my life—Jarrett, Brittney, and your mom, you guys will never have to worry about anything in your life no matter what the situation or how it ends, because just as running up that hill and trying to catch runners such as Jim Brown and Gale Sayers motivated me to do all I possibly could do, you three will motivate me to make sure your lives are happy and fulfilled."

Payton, who claimed he had no idea what Jarrett's speech might include, said "everyone" is a role model. He contrasted Michael Jordan and Pete Rose as role models, saying he drew from Rose "because he hustled every play. Just because he had one mistake in his life, am I supposed to throw back everything I gained from him? You can't do that. I'm talking to the kids. Everybody you meet you can learn something from."

Earlier, Payton admitted Canton's extravagant parade was "awesome. It really was."

Payton also provided insight into his legendary pranks that made him a locker room terror.

"I was remembering when our center, Dan Neal, was laying on a training table," Payton said. "We had just come out with electro-therapy. He was all wired up and I turned the juice as high as it could go. All his muscles were contracting."

Something about Payton always was electrifying.

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Payton's regular season stats

Year	Rush	Yards	Avg	Lg	TD	Rec	Yrds	Avg	Lg	TD
1975	196	679	3.5	54	7	33	213	6.5	40	0
1976	311	1,390	4.5	60	13	15	149	9.9	34	0
1977	339	1,852	5.5	73	14	27	269	10.0	75	2
1978	333	1,395	4.2	76	11	50	480	9.5	61	0
1979	369	1,610	4.4	43	14	31	313	10.1	65	2
1980	317	1,460	4.6	69	6	46	367	8.0	54	1
1981	339	1,222	3.6	39	6	41	379	9.2	30	2
1982	148	596	4.0	26	1	41	379	9.2	30	2
1983	314	1,421	4.5	49	6	53	607	11.5	74	2
1984	381	1,684	4.4	72	11	45	368	8.2	31	0
1985	324	1,551	4.8	40	9	49	483	9.9	65	2
1986	321	1,333	4.2	41	8	37	382	10.3	57	3
1987	146	533	3.7	17	4	33	217	6.6	16	1
Career	3838	16,726	4.4	76	110	492	4538	9.2	75	15

Walter's Hall of Fame speech

The following is a complete transcript of Walter Payton's remarks at his 1993 Hall of Fame induction. Walter followed son Jarrett, who served as his official presenter.

"When I first got here we made a wager about who would be the first one to break down in tears. I was the first one who said that I wouldn't and I was the first one to say how strong I was and everything else. But it goes to show you that a lot of times when you're amongst your peers, such as these great athletes over here, you try to be something that you're not. And after hearing my son get up here and talk, I don't care if I lose the bet.

"When you first get up here, the first thing you do is you think about the people who put you here. As the previous inductees and I'm sure coach Walsh will say, we're not standing up here because of our own merit or because of something we've done by ourselves. Football is a team game, and it takes everyone on that team to make a product such as these Hall of Famers who are sitting under this tent and the ones who are being inducted today.

"And they'll be the first ones to say that when they stood up here and they accepted being inducted here, they did it with a great deal of embarrassment because you were pointing all of the accolades toward them. They realized in their hearts that there were teammates who threw blocks, who caught passes and talked to them when they were down. There were high school coaches, such as Charles Boston, who took me under his wing and helped me and taught me the fundamentals of football. Then when I went to college there, was Robert Hill, who took me there and showed me what hard work and determination would do if you put forth the effort and you take a little time.

"They would stand up here and tell you everything they had on paper and everything they had in their hearts did not come from them solely alone. It came from a number of people who've helped them and they've met along the way, such as I. Every guy, every offensive lineman who played for the Chicago Bears helped me get that 16,000 yards, and I thank them.

"When you stand up here and give your acceptance speech, there's some humorous things that come to mind. One of them is my sister and my brother. When I was growing up, I was the baby. And when they had to clean the house on Saturdays when my mom went to work, being the baby I didn't have to do that. These guys beat me up. That's the reason I had the moves that I did. Because when you have an angry sister and an angry brother chasing you with a broom and dish rag, you tend to pick up moves that you never had before.

"I want to thank them for being a part of my life and helping me to be here. Also, there are a lot of people I could name, but I won't do that because when you do that you leave out people you are close to. If I named all the people who have been influential in my life, I would be up here beyond the right minutes. Probably eight days.

"But there's somebody special, my mom, because she was the one, who along with my father—who passed away in 1978—that instilled in me what you see here today, some of it good, and everything bad I earned that on my own. But I want to thank her for not giving up on me and for keeping me close to her and for giving me that extra push that a son needed who was very curious about life. In other words, she was the one who taught me the basics of what true values were all about.

"There was a guy that was supposed to be here today that was going to co-introduce me, Mr. Jim Finks, who is having a bout with lung cancer. I want to let him know that our prayers are with him. He was the guy who gave me my start. He was the one who called me when I was at Jackson State University the day before the draft. He asked me a question. He said, 'Walter, this is Jim Finks, how would you like to play for the Chicago Bears?'

"My answer to him was, 'Jim, I'll play for anybody,' and that's the way I felt at that particular time. Had I answered that question any different, I probably would have been playing for somebody else, maybe even Pittsburgh.

"Blessings come and blessings go. But the thing that I'm most proud of, and the thing that I'm most ashamed of, they coincide with each other. You saw my son up here a few minutes ago, and believe me, I had a lump in my throat that was so big it's unbelievable. I also have a little daughter, and I think about her also. Because their mom was with me for those 13 years that I played, and believe me they were not good. I was not the easiest person to get along with. And because of my wanting to give to so many other people, sometimes you tend to neglect the people that you truly love most. I want to stand up here and say that Jarrett, Brittney and your mom, you guys will never have to worry about anything in your life, no matter what the situation or how it ends. Because just as running up that hill and trying to catch runners such as Jim Brown and Gale Sayers motivated me to more than I thought I possibly could do, you three will motivate me to make sure your lives are happy and fulfilled.

"I'm going to close by saying life is short, it's oh so sweet, there are a lot of people we meet as we walk through these shallow halls, but the things that mean the most are the friendships that you make and take along with you. I'm happy to say that everyone that I've met in my life, I've gained something from them, be it negative or positive, it has reinforced my life in some aspect.

"When you speak of role models when we talk to our kids, everybody is a role model. Everyone. Just as you look at Michael Jordan, or a Pete Rose, who then falls on hard times. But I got something from the way he played the game, because he hustled every play. And just because he had one mistake in his life, am I supposed to throw back everything that I've gained from him? You can't do that.

"And I'm talking to the kids. Everybody you meet, you can learn something from them. Everybody you meet in your life can influence your life. Just as these people here have, just as you have, because the fans are what make this game. Without you being out here and coming to this, it wouldn't be professional football. So I stand here and I applaud you for supporting and staying with the National Football League and these players here. Thank you."

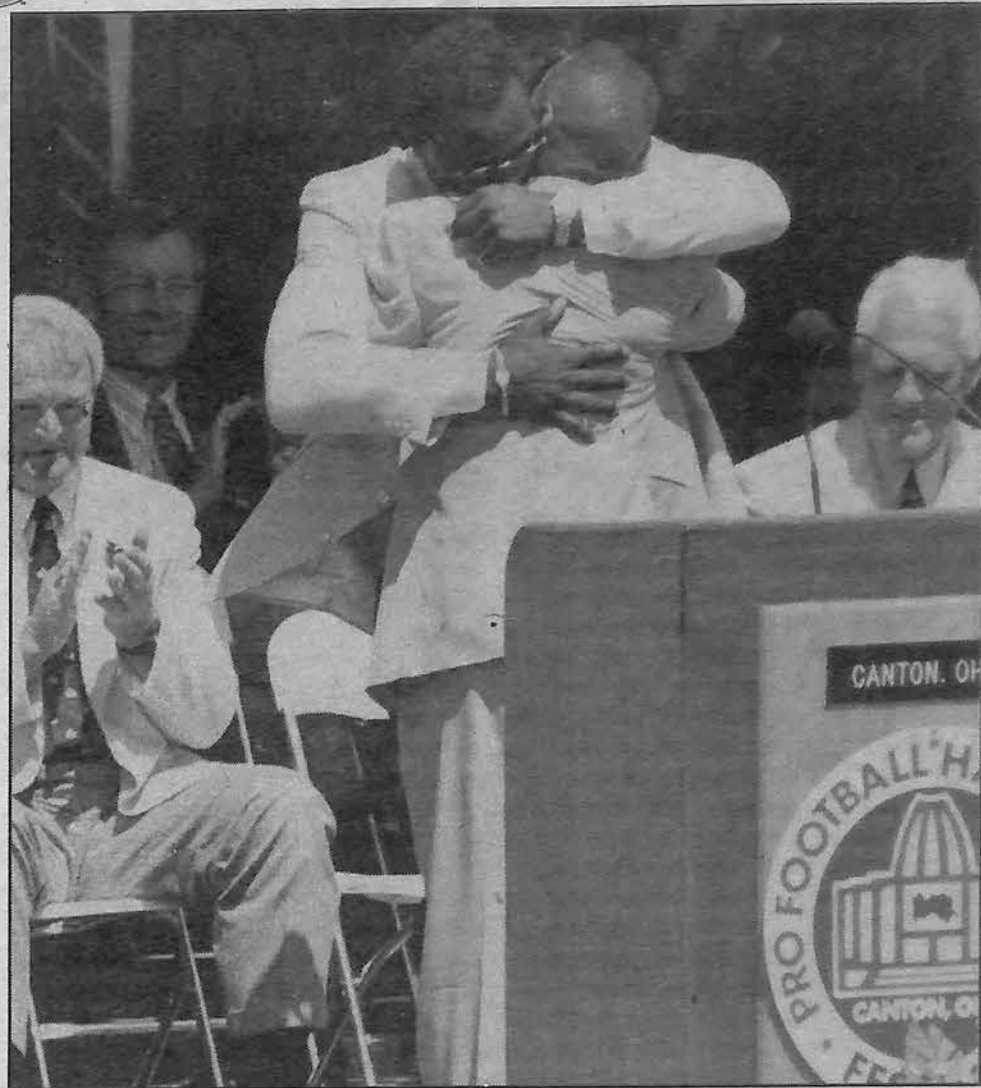


Photo by Steve Woltmann

Bears legend Walter Payton embraces son Jarrett after getting inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1993. Jarrett, then 12, was the first child to act as official presenter for a father in the Hall of Fame's history.

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Payton's best outings often came against rival Packers

By David Marran
Bear Report Correspondent

It was only fitting that there was a moment of silence to honor Walter Payton before the Packers-Seahawks game at Lambeau Field just hours after his death Nov. 1.

It was also fitting that the Bears' first game after Payton died of bile duct cancer was against the rival Packers in Green Bay.

The Hall of Fame running back usually saved his best for the Packers and had some of his most productive games at Lambeau Field.

Payton's performance against the Packers Nov. 3, 1985 was a microcosm of his career: Sweetness was powerful, productive and classy.

In the midst of the nastiest Bear-Packer game of recent vintage, Payton rose above the chippy play, fist fights and ejections to gain 192 yards in Chicago's 16-10 win. Veteran *Chicago Tribune* sports writer Don Pierson, a *Bear Report* columnist, said it may have been "the finest hour of Payton's incomparable career."

"I knocked the crap out of Payton," Packers linebacker Brian Noble said after the game. "He's such a good athlete that he just kept going."

The stubborn Packers led the eventual Super Bowl champions through three and a half quarters until Payton decided matters with a 27-yard TD run late in the game.

"I thought Payton's exhibition was maybe as good as I've ever seen a guy with a football under his arm play," Bears coach Mike Ditka said.

Payton was at the center of one the game's most controversial plays. Green Bay cornerback Mark Lee was ejected for

rudely escorting Payton out of bounds and dumping him over the Bears' bench. The play has grown in lore and ranks among the most talked about in the long and storied Packer-Bear rivalry.

"Tempers flare," Ditka said after the game. "You don't like to see it especially when they cheap-shot a guy like Payton, who has given as much to the game as anyone. I'm sure the kid didn't mean it."

Payton gained more yards against the Packers than versus any other team, compiling 2,484 yards in 24 games. He recorded 13 100-yard games, scored 18 TDs and averaged 103.5 yards per contest.

On Oct. 30, 1977, Payton tied the all-time Bears single-game record by rushing for 205 yards against the Packers at Lambeau Field. He once even attacked the Green Bay defense as a quarterback in one game at Soldier Field.

"Payton was such a fluid running back," Packers defensive coordinator John Meyer said in "Mudbaths and Bloodbaths," Cliff Christl and Gary D'Amato's book chronicling the Green Bay-Chicago rivalry.

"You'd think during the game, he wasn't doing that much," Meyer said. "Then you'd sit down after the game and go, 'Oh God!' You'd add up all the yards and it was staggering. He never had the break-away speed to go 60, 70 yards but he'd eight and 10-yard you to death."

More Payton highlights against Green Bay:

• **The First:** In a sign of things to come, Payton scored a key touchdown in his first game against the Packers Nov. 9, 1975 at Soldier Field. He capped a 71-yard drive with a five-yard touchdown run late in the first half to give the Bears an insurmountable 17-7 lead. Payton gained just 49 yards on 13 carries in the Bears'



Walter Payton was honored upon his final visit to Lambeau Field in 1987, but he never received a Packers helmet that was part of the original plans.

27-14 win.

Walter Payton, Packers center Larry McCarren recalled.

• **The Mouth:** Payton had many opportunities to rip the Packers during the acrimonious days of the rivalry in the Forrest Gregg-Ditka era, but he usually kept quiet. The only time Payton was caught chirping was prior to the teams' first game in 1978.

The Packers were off to a 4-1 start after five consecutive losing seasons.

"I've been surprised Green Bay has done so well," Payton told the *Woodstock (Ill.) Daily Sentinel*. "Everyone has, I think. But the only real good team they've played has been Oakland. After they lose on Sunday, they'll have to regroup and put things back together and I don't think they'll be able to do this."

According to "Mudbaths and Bloodbaths," Packers fan Mike Young, who lived in the Chicago area, called a reporter with the *Green Bay Press Gazette* and read him the quote. The statement made its way to the Packer bulletin board and Green Bay held Payton to 82 yards on 19 carries in a 24-14 Green Bay victory.

• **The Rout:** Payton gained 130 yards on 22 carries with three touchdowns in the Bears' 61-7 whipping of the Packers at Soldier Field Dec. 7, 1980.

"All I could hear on the PA was, 'Another Chicago Bear rushing record for

• **The QB:** With the Bears ravaged by injuries and incompetence at quarterback in the form of Rusty Lisch, Ditka let Payton run the offense from a shotgun formation in the Bear-Packer game of Dec. 9, 1984 at Soldier Field. Payton ran six plays at quarterback. He ran four times for 25 yards, threw an incomplection and an interception in the Packers' 20-14 win.

• **The Fridge:** Payton eased into the end zone twice behind the steam-rolling blocks of William "The Refrigerator" Perry in the Bears' 23-7 win on Monday Night at Soldier Field Oct. 21, 1985.

• **The Last:** Payton's final trip to Lambeau Field touched off a flurry inside the offices of 1265 Lombardi Ave.

The Packers wanted to honor Payton as he headed into retirement. One of the gifts the team wanted to give him was a Packer helmet, which did not sit well with Gregg.

Once he found out about the plan, Gregg stormed into the office of Bob Harlan, the Packers official who was coordinating the ceremony.

"Oh, he was livid," Harlan recalled. "... The helmet was what really set him off so we withdrew the helmet from the list of gifts, but we had the ceremony."

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Dynamic duo building bond

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

It's not quite Steve Young to Jerry Rice, but Cade McNown and Marcus Robinson are developing a productive partnership.

The Bears quarterback and wide receiver, both filling in for injured starters, have become the club's most lethal tandem this season. McNown and Robinson have produced four of the offense's five longest plays from scrimmage in 1999: TD passes of 82, 52 and 30 yards plus a 44-yard completion.

The bond is being strengthened by working together closely during the week.

"It's all in practice," said Robinson, who leads the Bears with 36 receptions for 590 yards and 4 TDs. "He throws bad balls and good balls in practice and you're making plays for him. It helps his confidence in you, so in game situations if a certain play is called and he feels that's the play that's been working in practice, he's going to keep giving it to you. And if you keep making plays, he's going to keep giving it to you."

Robinson, who has replaced the injured Curtis Conway (ankle) in the starting lineup, led the Bears in receiving four straight weeks, averaging 6.5 catches and 116 yards over that span.

Last season Robinson couldn't even get on the field, playing in only three

games while spending most Sundays watching in street clothes from the sideline.

What's responsible for his emergence this season?

"Coaches have been confident in me and I've been getting the ball and I've been making plays," he said, "so my confidence level is kind of high now."

Robinson's 161-yard effort in a 48-22 loss at Washington Oct. 31 was the NFL's top receiving performance of the week.

"It felt real good to go out and perform as I did, but we still came out with a loss and we were embarrassed by the score," Robinson said. "I was happy that I did good, but you've also got that sad feeling, so it's like mixed emotions."

Robinson beat highly-touted rookie Champ Bailey for two TDs in that game after the Bears had fallen behind 45-0.

"I beat him on two go routes, so I was feeling pretty good," Robinson said.

The 6-foot-3, 215-pounder was named the 1998 Offensive MVP of the NFL Europe League. But only now is gaining a reputation as a promising young player.

"It's strange because I went over there and did a whole lot and it was like, 'You did it over there but you can't do it over here,'" he said. "Now I came over here and I'm making plays the same way."

A fine mess: Bears center Olin Kreutz and Redskins defensive end

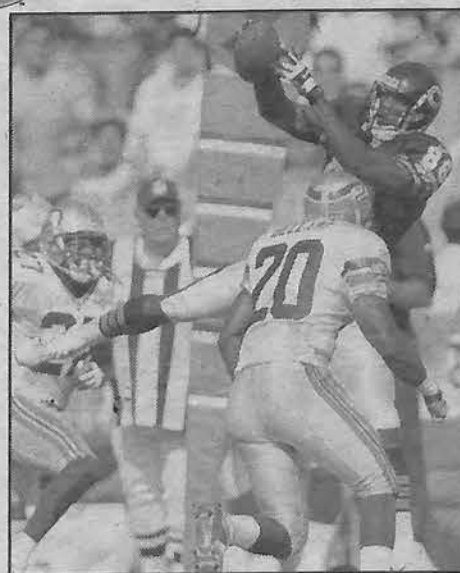


Photo by Steve Woltmann

Marcus Robinson ranks eighth in the NFC with 36 receptions.

Kenard Lang were fined \$5,000 each by the NFL for their actions in a scuffle late in the Oct. 31 game at Redskins Stadium.

Kreutz and running back Curtis Enis both went after Lang when they saw him attempting to injure another Bears teammate. Kreutz and Enis were ejected from the game; Lang was not.

"The team that retaliates is usually the team that gets caught," said Bears coach Dick Jauron. "What the guys told me coming off the field was exactly what I saw on film. But it doesn't give them license to retaliate."

Former Bears tackle Andy Heck, now with the Redskins, was also fined \$5,000 for swatting Bears defensive end Clyde Simmons in the helmet. That incident occurred when Heck thought Simmons was trying to delay Heck from lining up with the Redskins in a hurry-up offense.

Enis was not fined.

Overeagerness costs Matthews

Wanting to play so desperately ended up resulting in more time on the bench for Shane Matthews.

Because of a history of infrequent opportunities, the Bears quarterback may have rushed back too quickly from his hamstring injury. Matthews' aggravated his strained right hamstring in a 48-22 loss at Washington Oct. 31 and is back on the shelf.



Matthews

"Now, you can look back and say, 'Maybe if I would have waited another week, it would have been about 95 percent,'" he said. "My thinking was, I hadn't been on the field at all in my career, I would try everything I could to get back on the field."

Matthews' status for Sunday's home game against the Minnesota Vikings remains uncertain. The sixth-year quarterback suffered the setback when he was rolling to his right to avoid pressure late in the first half against Washington.

"It's not to the point where he did it initially," said Bears trainer Tim Bream. "We knew he was at risk. It was a risk we were willing to take."

Matthews had never previously been injured in college or the pros.

"Now I know how people who have hamstring injuries feel," Matthews said. "You just never know when it's going to be healthy."

—Larry Mayer

Bears season statistics

WON 3, LOST 5

Date	Opponent	Attendance
Sept. 12, W, 20-17	Kansas City	58,381
Sept. 19, L, 13-14	Seattle	66,944
Sept. 26, L, 17-24	at Oakland	50,458
Oct. 3, W, 14-10	New Orleans	66,944
Oct. 10, W, 24-22	at Minnesota	64,107
Oct. 17, L, 16-20	Philadelphia	66,944
Oct. 24, L, 3-6	at Tampa Bay	65,283
Oct. 31, L, 22-48	at Washington	77,621

	Bears	Opponents
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	150	149
Rushing	43	45
Passing	99	91
Penalty	8	13
3rd Down: Made/Att	57/139	35/105
3rd Down Pct.	41.0	33.3
4th Down: Made/Att	9/13	2/7
4th Down Pct.	69.2	28.6
POSSESSION AVG.	31:24	28:36
TOTAL NET YARDS	2706	2721
Avg. Per Game	338.3	340.1
Total Plays	586	507
Avg. Per Play	4.6	5.4
NET YARDS RUSHING	716	970
Avg. Per Game	89.5	121.3
Total Rushes	214	204
NET YARDS PASSING	1990	1751
Avg. Per Game	248.8	218.9
Sacked/Yards Lost	20/108	22/158
Gross Yards	2098	1909
Att./Completions	352/202	281/159
Completion Pct.	57.4	56.6
Had Intercepted	11	5
PUNTS/AVERAGE	43/41.8	40/38.3
NET PUNTING AVG.	43/34.0	40/30.7
PENALTIES/YARDS	68/537	48/374
FUMBLES/BALL LOST	14/9	19/13
TOUCHDOWNS	14	17
Rushing	1	5
Passing	12	10
Returns	1	2

SCORE BY PERIODS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	OT	PTS
TEAM	24	36	38	31	0	129
OPPONENTS	37	56	27	41	0	161

SCORING	TD	RU	PA	RT	K-PAT	FG	S	PTS
Conway	4	0	4	0	-	-	0	24
M. Robinson	4	0	4	0	-	-	0	24
Enis	3	1	2	0	-	-	-	18
Boniol	0	0	0	0	3/3	4/6	0	15
Gowins	0	0	0	0	3/3	4/6	0	15
Jaeger	0	0	0	0	7/7	2/8	0	13
Allred	1	0	1	0	-	-	0	6
S. Harris	1	0	0	1	-	-	0	6
Wetnight	1	0	1	0	-	-	0	6
McNown	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	2
TEAM	14	1	12	1	13/13	10/20	0	129
OPPONENTS	17	5	10	2	17/17	14/18	0	161

2-Pt. Conversions: McNown, Team 0-0, Opponents 0-0

Sacks: Simmons 5.0, Burton 3.0, Flanagan 3.0, B. Robinson 3.0, Davis 2.0, Holdman 2.0, Minter 1.0, Smith 1.0, Wells 1.0, McDonald 0.5, Tuinei 0.5, TEAM 22.0, OPPONENTS 20.0

RUSHING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Enis	175	553	3.2	18	1
McNown	12	62	5.2	13	0
Milburn	7	31	4.4	15	0
Bennett	4	25	6.3	15	0
Matthews	10	24	2.4	14	0
Engram	2	11	5.5	9	0
Brooks	1	7	7.0	7	0
Allen	2	5	2.5	4	0
Conway	1	-2	-2.0	-2	0
TEAM	214	716	3.3	18	1
OPPONENTS	204	970	4.8	76	5

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
M. Robinson	36	590	16.4	80	4
Engram	36	366	10.2	50	0
Conway	29	310	10.7	30	4
Enis	125	218	8.7	28	2
Wetnight	23	172	7.5	22	1
Brooks	13	150	11.5	30	0
Milburn	13	109	8.4	15	0
Bennett	9	66	7.3	14	0
Allred	9	50	5.6	10	1
Mayes	4	42	10.5	16	0
Hallock	4	14	3.5	6	0
Bates	1	11	11.0	11	0
TEAM	202	2098	10.4	80	12
OPPONENTS	159	1909	12.0	86	10

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Parrish	1	41	41.0	41	0
Carter	1	36	36.0	36	0
Minter	1	32	32.0	32	0
Burns	1	15	15.0	15	0
Cousin	1	1	1.0	1	0
TEAM	5	125	25.0	41	0
OPPONENTS	11	229	20.8	88	1

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Net	TB	In	Lg	B
Sauerbrun	43	1797	41.8	34.0	8	10	59	0
TEAM	43	1797	41.8	34.0	8	10	59	0
OPP.	40	1531	38.3	30.7	7	10	64	0

PUNT RETURNS	Ret.	FC	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Milburn	16	7	165	10.3	54	0
TEAM	16	7	165	10.3	54	0
OPPONENTS	19	6	173	9.1	35	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Milburn	30	745	24.8	93	0
Bennett	1	15	15.0	15	0
Hallock	1	3	3.0	3	0
Wiegmann	1	2	2.0	2	0
TEAM	33	765	23.2	93	0
OPPONENTS	26	504	19.4	56	0

FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Jaeger	0/0	0/0	0/2	1/5	1/1
Boniol	0/0	1/1	0/1	3/4	0/0
Gowins	0/0	3/3	0/0	1/2	0/1
TEAM	0/0	4/4	0/3	5/11	1/2
OPPONENTS	0/0	6/6	3/5	3/4	2/3

PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	TD	Int.	LG	Rating
Matthews	200	124	1156	8	4	30	82.8
McNown	130	68	625	4	6	80	63.1
Miller	22	10	117	0	1	50	43.2
TEAM	352	202	2098	12	11	80	73.1
OPP.	281	159	1909	10	5	96	82.0



VIEWPOINT

P.O. BOX 4205, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60006

Shocked and saddened by the tragic death of Walter Payton, Bear Report readers shared their thoughts with us about the NFL's all-time leading rusher. A handful of those letters follow:

My prayers and condolences go out to the entire Payton family. I not only have lost a childhood hero but also that part of my childhood that was in my heart. I grew up in poverty on the west side of Chicago but always found time to be inspired by the play of Walter Payton. There were times where watching him take ownership of the football field would brighten the outlook of my future.

I am a now somewhat successful engineer in Virginia and I like to believe that his spirit and determination somehow affected my spirit and determination to move up from poverty and to enjoy life always. Thank you so very much, Walter Payton.

Derrick A. Walters
Via email

I am very sad to hear that Walter Payton passed away. Not only was he the greatest football player and gentlemen that ever lived; he was also my hero. I had the honor of meeting Walter back in the '80s when he came to Des Moines with the rest of the Bears to play a charity basketball game against the local police department.

That meeting left a positive influence on my life that I will always remember. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family and the city of Chicago. God Bless you all and Go Bears!

Todd A. Jansen
Iowa City, Iowa

I, like many other Bears fans, have been at a loss of words to express my gratitude towards Walter Payton. For so long he was an inspiration not only to his team but to his fans as well. More than any other player in football's history, he is the symbol or mold of perfection that every player should strive for.

My friends came over to my house as soon as they heard that he had passed on. I simply said that for that great of man to be called home this early could only mean one thing: There is a football game in heaven, and God needed a halfback.

God bless the Bears and all the Bears fans, but above all God bless Walter Payton and the Payton family.

A.D. Myers
Crescent, Oklahoma

All Bear fans are feeling the loss of Walter Payton, a great player and man. He projected an image that all could learn from. He played with great intensity on every down no matter what his assignment. One of the plays I most remember was the block he made on a blitzing linebacker that allowed Jim McMahon to throw a touchdown pass on his first play on the big comeback victory over the Vikings in 1985.

How can anyone forget his trademarks of carrying the ball in one hand or the high stepping into the end zone for a touchdown.

Many years back at halftime CBS used to profile different players to music. Any Bear fan who has seen the one on Walter Payton will never forget it. It was performed to Carly Simon singing a song which I believe is titled "Nobody Does It Better".

We want your opinions!

We want to know what you think about the Bears! We welcome letters of 200 words or less on all matters involving the Bears. Letters are subject to editing. Please sign your name and include your address and phone number. Send all letters to the above address or reach us via e-mail at: BearReport@aol.com.



The film clip was perfect. I wish *Bear Report* could research and find out whether they could obtain this film clip from CBS and possibly get it made available to Bear Fans.

Robert Heinz
San Antonio, Texas

As I sit in my home in Clearwater, Fla., as an avid Bears fan, it saddens me to watch the reports out of Chicago of the passing of Walter Payton.

He was the finest football player I ever had the privilege to watch play the game of football. He has been an inspiration to many and has contributed great pleasure to thousands of people in his short lifetime. His legend will go on forever. Not only did he contribute to the game of football but to every endeavor he ever took on.

The City of Chicago has lost a great humanitarian. My heartfelt sympathy goes out to his family—they will be in every Bear fans' prayers in the coming days. His memory will always live on in the hearts of his truest fans.

Patricia A. Klein
Clearwater, Florida

Football lost a great man on Nov. 1. I found it very tasteful that both Mike Holmgren of Seattle and Ray Rhodes of Green Bay chose to lead their teams to a combined score of 34 (later that night in a 27-7 Seattle win) in honor of the player that gave us all a reason to keep watching the games.

Bryan Smith
Boulder, Colorado

The day I awoke and heard the tragedy of Sweetness' passing I was heartbroken. Not only was he a role model and an idol to me, he was in a sense a father figure. I had always listened to and tried to be like Walter Payton, especially when I played football.

Growing up and being a fan of his since 1976 and living in a single parent home, Walter was in a way a father figure to me. Not only did I love the way he played the game with his own unique style, but I loved him for the person he was; a true and genuine person.

I know through all the years I followed Walter he had made me a better person. From me and my family to Walter and his family, you will truly be missed and we love you and pray for you. I thank the Lord for allowing me to live to see such a blessed person.

Walter, I know you are at peace. May God bless you. And again, thank you Sweetness.

Michael Salvatierra
San Diego, California

This has been one of the saddest days of my life. This is a Bears fan who has grown up watching Walter, and now my hero has passed away. My home will not be the same.

Walter had the heart that all players should play with today. Where have all the players like Walter gone? Players today get the slightest injuries, and they don't play.

I have a video recording of every Bears game since 1985, and now it looks like that's all I have of Payton except for what is in my heart.

Walter, I will miss you, my family will miss you, and my son, Payton, will miss you. But at least I know you're having fun upstairs.

John Anderson
Phoenix, Arizona

Poet/philosopher George Santayana once said:

"The end of an evening party is to go to bed;

"But it's use is to gather congenial people together, that they may pass the time pleasantly.

"An invitation to the dance is not rendered ironical, because the dance cannot last forever."

Walter, you were the greatest dancer of all time.

Ron Timmons
Indianapolis, Indiana



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WANTED: VHS tapes of the following Bears games: 11-4-84 vs. Raiders, 9-14-87 vs. Giants, 11-6-88 vs. Bucs, 11-13-88 at Redskins, 9-10-89 vs. Bengals, 9-24-89 at Lions, 10-2-89 vs. Eagles, 1-6-91 vs. Saints.

Contact: Al Ott, P.O. Box 264, Grantsburg, WI 54840, (715) 463-2287.

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VIEWPOINT

P.O. BOX 4205, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60006



Walter has just scored his biggest touchdown. He did not run through the pearly gates, he *leaped* over them with his classic leap. Even God is impressed. Now he is pulling his best practical jokes on Coach Papa Bear and Coach Lombardi. Walter is now finally at peace, free from all disease, God has blessed him.

All of Chicago has been blessed to have had the privilege of not only knowing this great man, and having him live among us, but to have had the greatest halfback of all time play for our beloved Bears for his entire career. There will never be another, and there should not be.

When they redo Soldier Field maybe it should be renamed Payton's Field. After all, when he played on it for 13 glorious years, it was his field.

God Bless all of us Chicagoans for being so lucky and so honored.

Rich Jacobson
Palatine, Illinois

It is hard to believe that Walter has passed on from this life. As a family, we have watched him over the years and have found him to be a person who was above the crowd.

Yes, we know of all of his records in sports, but the thing that will remain is the fact that he was a good individual and a wonderful family man.

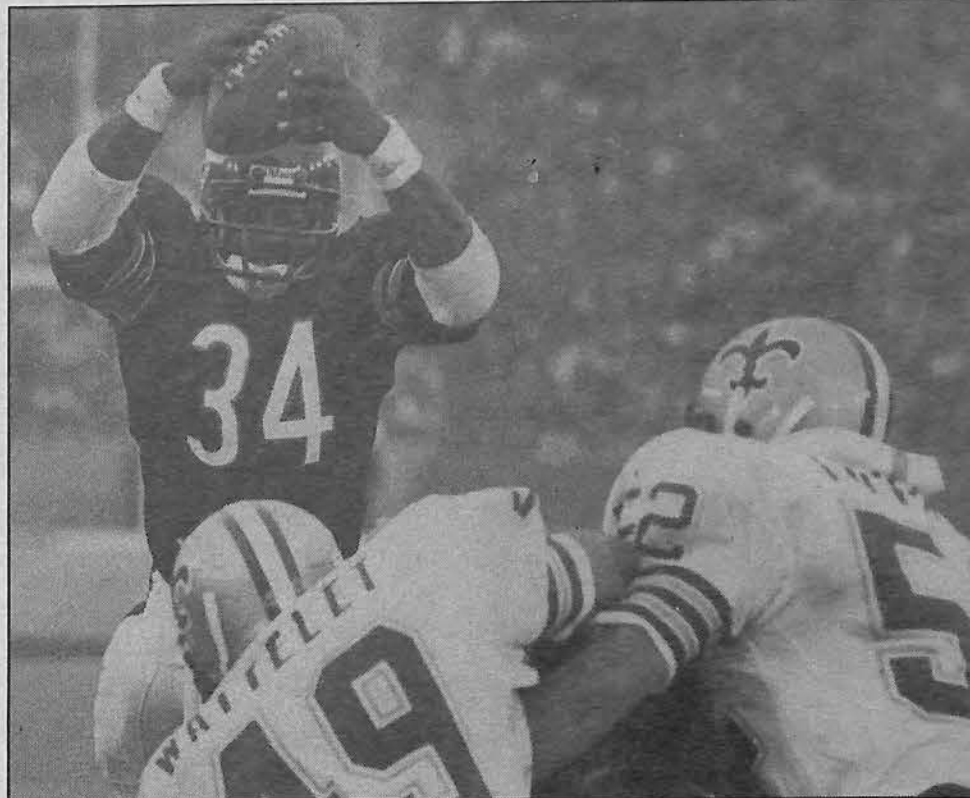
He will be sorely missed by our family, who did admire him from afar, as avid Bears fans.

However, the bottom line is that God will have his starting running back now in Heaven!

The Horstman and Harper Families
Arlington, Texas

God Bless the Walter Payton family and thank you, Walter, for your inspiration, your kindness, your compassion.

I watched you from the first day you stepped onto the field at Soldier Field. I watched you grow. I smiled, I cheered, I was inspired. Today as I look at your pic-



tures and think of all the great memories. I smiled, I cried, I cheered.

"How sweet it is in Heaven" I have been blessed in knowing of you. On Monday, Nov. 1, 1999 Walter Payton scored the biggest touchdown ever. I have been a loyal Bears fans for 45 years and will be forever.

Thank you, Walter Payton. Godspeed.

Gloria Baird
Toledo, Ohio

I'm not a Bears fan, but I must say that I'm truly sorry for the passing of Walter "Sweetness" Payton. My wife is truly a Walter Payton fan and she has taken this death very hard. May God bless the family.

Kelvin Payne
Via Email

I've been a Bears fan ever since I could

remember. I've never been to Chicago, but I loved to watch the Bears and Walter Payton play. He will be missed as a human

Fans can send their condolences to Walter Payton's family at:

Walter Payton, Inc.
5407 Trillium Blvd. Suite
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

being and a football player. Thank you for the memories.

Jesse Herrera
Modesto, California

Being a Packers fan for the past 61 years doesn't mean that I haven't admired many Bear players during that time. Until five years ago I had lived my entire life in Chicago. Who could not admire guys like Nagurski, Luckman, Bulldog Turner, Butkus, Sayers, and a host of others? I remember Butkus as a little kid growing up in our neighborhood.

But on top of this list of stars, Walter Payton stands alone. What a guy. He surely will be missed by all football fans everywhere. Our condolences to his family.

Fred and Irene Klopff
Port St. Lucie, Florida



Payton Davis

Payton's legacy manifests itself in several ways

Walter Payton was so admired and revered by Bears fans that many named their children after the legendary running back.

One example is Payton Davis, a 7-year-old pictured at left who lives in Wren, Ohio.

Her father, Jack, is a lifelong Bears fan despite never living in Chicago. So why is his daughter named after Sweetness?

"I've been a Bears man my whole life," Jack said, "and everything about Walter is how I'd like for her to be as far as work ethic and moral standards."

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*"Nobody does it better. Makes me feel sad for the rest.
Nobody does it half as good as you. Baby you're the best."*

Goodbye, Walter. You will never be forgotten.

